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Dungeon®

January/February 2002
Issue #90

"Because I could not stop for Death–
He kindly stopped for me–
The carriage held but just ourselves
And immortality."
–Emily Dickinson,
Because I Could Not Stop For Death

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In With the New

But Not Out With the Old

by Chris Thomasson

I'm not a big fan of "tour-guide editorials"—that is, editorials where the editor tells you what's in the issue and why you'll enjoy it. If I want to know what's in the issue, I'll go to the Table of Contents.

That said, Issue #90 is a little different from your typical *Dungeon Magazine*. As you've probably noticed, we've gained a few pounds. Some might say the desk job is finally getting to us, but the truth is that we've *added* content. Before we go any farther, do me a favor: Close the magazine, and turn it over.

Are you back? Good.

What you hold in your meaty, sweaty little hands is the new, improved *Dungeon/Polyhedron Magazine*. That's right, our sister publication from the RPGA has joined forces with your favorite D&D adventure magazine. Some of you were probably aware that the change was coming, others might have had their heads in the sand. We won't hold it against you.

Before you panic and start writing letters complaining that we're taking away D&D content and replacing it with RPGA "crap," allow me to make two things clear (well, three things, since nothing that comes from the RPGA is crap, right Erik?).

First, *Polyhedron* isn't the hard-to-find, selectively available game magazine anymore. No longer is the content "exclusive" to RPGA members. You see, *Polyhedron* is now the definitive d20 magazine, as well as the official conduit for RPGA news.

That means that in every 64-page issue, you're going to get all sorts of nifty d20 content, including reviews in support of all sorts of d20 products (not just Wizards of the Coast products, either). Each issue of *Polyhedron* also includes a brand new d20 mini-game, something Erik hasn't stopped babbling about for months now.

Second, you're still going to get 116 pages of *Dungeon* content each issue. That means no reduced page count in *Dungeon*. In fact, we're actually *adding* a new feature to the magazine. Beginning with this issue of *Dungeon,* we're unveiling "Critical Threats." This one- or two-page column provides DMs with either a statted-up and fleshed-out NPC—including favorite tactics, character background and personality, a portrait, and adventure hooks to incorporate the character into your campaign—or a single, unique room complete with a detailed description, a snazzy map, and adventure hooks to work the location into your game. You'll find one of the former in this issue, and we'll bring you the map version in Issue #91.

"Side Treks" provide you with a short adventure consisting of one or two encounters—something you can springboard a longer adventure off of or use as a bridge between adventures. "Critical Threats" takes the idea one step further. The goal of this feature is to provide you with the bare bones of an adventure on a single page. And let's face it: One of the toughest jobs DMs face now is finding time to stat up characters and come up with cool rooms for PCs to explore. "Critical Threats" also makes it easier than ever to get published in *Dungeon*—we're dying to see your ideas for this new feature!

But wait, there's more. You see, next month . . . well, you'll just have to pick it up to see what else is in the works. So what are you waiting for? The Table of Contents is calling you.

Editor

Dungeon®

Volume XV, No. 6 Issue #90

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Letters
Reader Rapport

Tell us what you think of this issue's adventures. Write to: Letters, DUNGEON Magazine, *1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Renton, WA 98055 or send an email to* **dungeon@wizards.com.**

CAMPAIGN AWAY!

Let me first say that *DUNGEON* has been and always will be a required resource in my library. I especially enjoy the "Maps of Mystery." In fact, Guildpost (from Issue #85) is the town my players currently adventure in.

I've noticed that some of readers feel that an entire campaign should be included in future issues. Why? With a few adjustments, this is already being done. I know each adventure has its own villain, but what's wrong with taking a villain from the last adventure and using him for the current adventure? For example, I have used Acessiwal (from Issue #87's "Glacier Season") in three different adventures as the villain in the background.

Also, the adventures are rather easy to adjust for different levels. I have been known to take a 1st-level adventure and make it a 15th-level adventure.

Being a DM in a BIRTHRIGHT campaign, I have learned to make modifications in my adventures to adjust them to my campaign. With so little out there for BIRTHRIGHT adventures, I have turned to *DUNGEON Magazine* and made adjustments as necessary.

Jon Rathbun
Warren, OH

TOKEN OF AFFECTION

I wanted to say kudos for the tokens you've been including in *DUNGEON Magazine* and offer a couple of suggestions from a user's point of view. The tokens are obviously a great idea for those who don't have a lot of miniatures and don't really want to (or don't have the means to) acquire them. But they are also very useful for supplementing a miniatures collection.

While I have a great miniatures collection at home, I hate taking it with me while traveling (even just across town). Miniatures take up a lot of room and weight, and it's a pain to pack and unpack them wherever I'm going. Tokens, however, are light and take up very little space and are the ideal DMing tool away from home. They are a key part of what I call my DMing travel pack.

Another cool thing about tokens is that they have the feature of being stackable. You can easily put more than one token in the same square or hex, and you can put miniatures on top of them. I've grown fond of using tokens for mounts, since a miniature (or a token representing a

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character or monster) can stack on top of the mount. When the rider dismounts, both it and the mount are still represented. I also like using tokens for light sources and to indicate things like the center or edge of a spell burst.

Now that I've explained a couple of the things I like to do with tokens, my suggestions for future token releases are easy to deduce. I'd like to see light source tokens: torches, hooded lanterns, and bullseye lanterns. (Be sure and put directional information on the bullseye lantern so that the position of the token shows where it's pointing!) I'd also suggest horses and other mounts, like ponys and war dogs, made available. Finally, a token that indicates the center of a spell burst. Remember that spell bursts are centered (on a square grid) at a grid intersection between four squares, not in the center of a square itself, so the ideal token for this would be one that has four grid lines coming out from the center burst icon that you could overlay on top of the corresponding lines on the battlemat. A similar one should be designed for a hex map, since many people use those too. My last suggestion is to print up tokens that have abstract icons on them; these can be used for miscellaneous things like tables, treasure, or whatever. There are some tokens like this from the beginners boxed set, but I suspect most *Dungeon* subscribers don't have that. I use them more than any of the other tokens I own.

I have one nitpicky complaint regarding the monster tokens: Put the name of the monster on the front or back of the token. Now that you've printed a bunch of them, I can't remember what they all are, and I have resorted to writing the names on the tokens. I realize I can use any token for any creature (and often do), but the gamer geek inside me really wants to know what monster the token was supposed to be used for.

Thanks again for printing these and making them available in several issues of your fine magazine. Count me among your enthusiastic subscribers!

Peter Adkison
Gaming Mogul (retired)
adkison@aol.com

The idea of dungeon dressing tokens and spell effect tokens has been discussed in the past. We're a little hesitant to print something like a fireball *spread, since it would take up nearly an entire token sheet. The token representing a center of a spell burst might be just the ticket, though. We'll also consider ways to put the monsters' names on the tokens (I'd prefer the back, since words on the front might cover up too much of the image). I always thought it was cool to have the blank backs in case you wanted to keep your players in the dark as to what they were facing, but I can see the merits of labeling the tokens, too. What do the rest of you think?*

Down with the Realms

Before I start ranting, I love your magazine, especially the art. Where I live, there is no place to get fantasy artwork, so I look forward to each issue to see the new illustrations. (I always hope for Todd Lockwood's dragons; they kick butt!)

I've only been reading *Dungeon* for a short time but I've come to notice the increase in Forgotten Realms modules. I just bought Issue #88 and when I opened it, I found that half the adventures were for the Realms. I was a little angry; I'm not a big fan of the Forgotten Realms. I'd personally like to see more Dragonlance adventures like "Anvil of Time" (Issue #86), but for lower level characters, so I could maybe start a campaign.

Heather Graham
Trenton, Ontario
Canada

Any Forgotten Realms adventure can be used in another fantasy campaign setting with minimal alterations. Try to look past the Forgotten Realms tag and judge the adventure on its own merits.

continued on page 112

The Elfwhisper

Can You Carry A Tune?

by J.C. Alvarez

artwork by Derek Thompson • cartography by Craig Zipse

"The Elfwhisper" is a D&D adventure designed for four 8th-level PCs. Those who successfully complete the adventure should amass enough experience points to advance one level. PCs of 9th level should find it challenging as well, but will not gain enough experience to advance to 10th level. Successfully completing the adventure depends more on wits than direct confrontation, so with a few modifications, low-level characters should be able to survive it. See the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for details. At least one PC should know the Elven language or be able to comprehend it with the aid of magic. Bard, druid, and ranger PCs are ideal for the adventure. Players of elven or half-elven PCs will find many remarkable roleplaying opportunities.

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Background

The faerie Wildwood (called the Ilumentarinen by elves) is haunted by a song. This song is called the Ilumeninoridan, or *Elfwhisper,* and its unearthly beauty can only be heard and understood by elves. As soon as an elf has the misfortune of hearing it, he is transfixed, his soul trapped by the forest spirits. He then becomes a thrall, an entranced slave of the woodlands, never to be seen outside the Wildwood again.

The Ilumeninoridan was first performed by the elven maiden Ilumenine, daughter of King Ilarnesil. Ilumenine had a silver harp on which she composed the strange melody. Legend states that Ilumenine sang and played with such unearthly passion that the forest came to life, enamored with the sound. But Ilumenine's blessed talent also incurred the wrath of her three envious sisters, all skilled sorceresses. In their spite, they summoned the Ygwannach, a forest spirit, to the physical world and made it listen to the Ilumeninoridan. Lured by Ilumenine's heavenly song and possessed of a twisted physical form, the Ygwannach came upon Ilarnesil's city followed by hordes of maddened forest creatures, wreaking havoc to get to the source of the Ilumeninoridan. The kingdom fell to the Ygwannach, and Ilarnesil's family perished. Ilumenine's voice was silenced forever by the Ygwannach's deadly embrace. The heart of the Wildwood grew dark and eerie, the cursed domain of the mad forest spirit.

Knowing it was her song that brought about her people's doom, Ilumenine remained at the ruined elven city as a ghost. Her sisters, doomed by their own hatred, became a covey of hags. They still live near the Ygwannach, hating Ilumenine even more because now she sings for eternity, the Ygwannach a slave to her song. Elves and elf-kin who hear the eerie song are overcome by such sorrow that they are compelled to enter the forest, where they are consumed by the Ygwannach. Their spirits live on as ghosts trapped by the curse of the *Elfwhisper*. The victims of the song have formed a choir, adding their own melancholy lyrics to Ilumenine's song of doom . . .

Adventure Summary

Following the trail of the notorious outlaw Mario Navarro, the PCs arrive at the town of Grassguard, near the site where Navarro and his band are hiding. Grassguard is the only human settlement near the Wildwood, and its inhabitants live there with a sense of unease because of the haunted forest's proximity.

Quince Rodder, the town's halfling major, informs the PCs that Mario Navarro's brigands have set camp near Grassguard, and they already attacked a farm on the outskirts of town. Looking for Navarro, the PCs meet some other NPCs, including Morlaine the Minstrel, a crazed half-elven bard who tells them the story of the haunting as he knows it. The PCs also learn that Navarro's hideout might be somewhere near the Wildwood. Following the bandits' trail, the PCs eventually learn that they must pursue the brigand into the haunted wood.

After a skirmish with the forest's dark denizens, the PCs encounter Ilumenine and her eerie choir. In this encounter, they learn that to defeat the Ygwannach, they must free the cursed ghost of Ilumenine and dispel her haunting song. This requires the use of Ilumenine's lost silver harp, which is currently in the possession of the covey of hags who were once the ghost's sisters, and whose hate and power have grown over the centuries since they cursed the woods. Mario Navarro's gang is also hiding in the forest.

Once the PCs defeat the sisters and retrieve the harp, they are able to free the haunted souls of the Wildwood. This leads to a battle with the Ygwannach in its physical form (a huge half-fiend shambling mound).

Player Introduction

The DM should give the players a copy of the wanted notice or describe its contents to them. If the PCs are interested in capturing Navarro (as they should be), tell them they are carrying the wanted notice. Their inquiries among the authorities and local folk has led them to Grassguard, a settlement

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

Although the adventure is designed for 8th-level characters, the modules can be run for characters of 6th-7th level, as well as for characters of 9th-11th level.

6th- to 7th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written with the following changes:

- Reduce the challenge of the random encounters significantly. For example, reduce the number of wolves to 5, the number of shadows to 2, the number of dire wolves to 2, and the number of boars to 3.
- Reduce the number of bandits in area **W2** to 6.
- Reduce the number of dire badgers in area **W3** to 3.
- Reduce the number of dire wolves in area **W5** to 7.
- Make it more clear to the PCs that the pixies are not a physical threat or reduce their number.
- Make Mario Navarro a 6th- or 7th-level fighter.
- Reduce the Ygwannach's Hit Dice to 10. Note that this will drop his size from Huge to Large.
- Make Morgo (area **H1**) a 4th-level ogre fighter.
- Reduce the number of ogres in area **H2** to 4.
- Make the water elemental in area **H4** Large instead of Huge.
- Reduce the number of crocodiles in area **H5** to 6.
- Instead of allowing the hag covey to use their covey powers, separate them into different areas of the lair so the PCs can fight them separately. If you do this, you might want to give one or more of them a 1-3 levels of sorcerer to maintain a healthy challenge for the PCs.
- Make the black pudding in area **H7** two gray oozes.
- Reduce the number of scrags in area **H8** to 2.

9th- to 11th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written with the following changes:

- Add one to three more creatures to each random encounter, or allow for reinforcements to arrive.
- Make the bandits 2nd- or 3rd-level rogues, but you might want to reduce their number, since multiple rogues can be extremely deadly, even to high-level parties.
- Add two more ettercaps to area **W4**.
- Make Mario Navarro's level equal to the PCs' party level.
- Allow the PCs to battle the shadows in area **T1** for a round or two before having the ghosts make an appearance.
- Give Morgo (area **H1**) two barbarian levels.
- Make the huge water elemental (area **H4**) a greater water elemental.
- Don't pull any punches with the hags' covey powers. (Use *forcecage* and *mind blank* from hiding, for example.)
- Add a level of fighter to each of the scrags in area **H8**.

You will need to adjust the amount of treasure to match the party's starting level; use the following simple formula:

Total GP Value in Treasure = Party's Average Level × 7,500 gp.

near the elven Wildwood. Grassguard lies in the direction Navarro fled when last seen, so it should be a good place to gather additional information on the bandit's whereabouts.

"The Elfwhisper" takes place in an undefined area inside a generic fantasy world; it can be adapted to Greyhawk or any other fantasy setting by changing the names of places like the Wildwood, Grassguard, Sternhelm, and all cities listed in the wanted notice. It is fairly important, however, that after renaming the locations, they remain:

Sternhelm—A far-off city from which the PCs come seeking for Navarro.

Grassguard—A rural town (hamlet) located near a forest.

The Wildwood—A haunted forest once inhabited by elves.

Ilumentarinen—An elven kingdom that once stood in the haunted forest.

The Forgotten Realms has many suitable areas for this adventure. If you're playing a Forgotten Realms campaign, consider using sites in and near the High Forest or sites in the vicinity of Cormanthor and Myth Drannor.

Grassguard

It's a sunny afternoon when you finally arrive in Grassguard. The town looks like a nice, quiet, rural hamlet, complete with stucco houses, well-groomed gardens, and small stone trails. It seems to be primarily inhabited by human folk. If Navarro actually came by here, he must have done it quietly—that, or these people don't care about danger. The few townsfolk outside their houses turn and smile at your approach.

The only bleak part of this idyllic view is the presence of many wanted notices, such as the one you're carrying. Mario Navarro's face occupies each one.

Grassguard is a small settlement, founded less than fifty years ago by adventurous colonists. The township is comprised mainly of farmers and woodsmen, with some "special" inhabitants who are detailed below. They want only to live peacefully, away from civilization, but the nearness of the Wildwood has been troublesome. The few elven inhabitants from town disappeared not long after Grassguard was built; it has been ten years since an elf or half-elf has been seen in the area (with the exception of Morlaine)—no one knows why. The last few weeks have been especially hard, thanks to Morlaine's haunting tales and the fact that Navarro and his gang are stalking the area (his gang just razed the nearby Earfield farm).

Gathering Information in Grassguard

PCs seeking information about Grassguard, Mario Navarro, or the Wildwood must make Gather Information checks.

Grassguard and Mario Navarro

- **DC 5:** "Mayor Rodder knows everything that goes on in the town. You should talk with him."
- **DC 10:** "It's usually pretty quiet around here, but those bandits who burned down that farm outside town are supposedly nearby. That's making everyone nervous."
- **DC 15:** "The Earfield farm was burnt to the ground by the bandits. They killed everyone. Those bandits need to be stopped before they come for the rest of us."
- **DC 18:** "Keerath, the militia captain, says that Mayor Rodder hasn't done enough to stop the bandits. I'm not sure what else the mayor could do, though. We can't turn Grassguard into a fort; we don't have the money to build proper walls."
- **DC 20:** "It seems like this town is becoming less hospitable by the day. We used to have elves living in Grassguard, but they all disappeared a long time ago, and we haven't seen one in years. Then there was the drought last year and a hard winter after that. Now we've got bandits, and it looks like the Wildwood can make you go crazy like poor Morlaine. If this keeps up for much longer, I'll pull up roots and heading out."

The Wildwood

• **DC 5:** "Don't go in there. I went hunting there once. I won't go anymore; now I farm and fish for a living. Those woods have more secrets and spirits than I care to think about."

• **DC 10:** "I heard it's haunted. That crazy bard came back from the Wildwood singing about forest spirits."

• **DC 15:** "The bandits are probably hiding in woods—lots of places to hide in the Wildwood. If you're thinking of going after the bandits, you'll want to go in by way of the trail by Grassguard Creek. That's the only trail in that I know off, and you're liable to get lost otherwise."

• **DC 18:** "Keerath, the leader of our militia, says he has gone into the Wildwood to look for the bandits. He's a braver man than I. Morlaine went mad after he went to the Wildwood, and there weren't even bandits around then. Morlaine? He lives in a shack not far from here. You'll know it by the singing."

• **DC 20:** "I got lost once and I ended up in the Wildwood. Don't tell anyone I said this, but I thought I heard singing. Of course, it might have been that crazy bard, Morlaine."

Encounters in Town

The PCs might head straight to the Green Bird Inn, or with the results of their Gather Information checks they might choose to seek out Mayor Rodder, Keerath, or Morlaine. The mayor and Keerath will seek them out if they are not approached, and the PCs should pass by Morlaine's shack one their way out of town to investigate the Earfield farm or the Wildwood. The encounters that follow deal with these possibilities.

Encounter 1. Visiting the Inn. The Green Bird Inn is the only inn in town. It serves as both an inn and tavern, as well as the local watering hole and gathering place for the people of Grassguard. When there's a town emergency, people gather outside the Green Bird Inn to find out what to do.

Rice Rina runs the inn well. She keeps it clean and takes care of those who indulge too much by letting them stay in her inn's rooms when they aren't filled by guests (a rare occasion). She's well-liked, and the townspeople are protective of her.

Rice Rina, Female Human Com3: CR —; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 3d4+6; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, club); AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Profession (cook) +8, Profession (innkeeper) +8. *Feats:* Dodge, Endurance, Skill Focus (Profession—innkeeper).

Possessions: Club, silver earings worth 30 gp.

Development: Rice Rina is interested in all newcomers. She is curious about where the PCs come from and how they became adventurers. She's not a gossip, but she'll give her opinion on any topic the PCs ask about. She doesn't know details about the bandits, but she knows some tales of Navarro's exploits. She likes Mayor Rodder and thinks he's doing a fine job of running the town. She knows Keerath is jealous of Mayor Rodder, but she is sweet on Keerath and is loath to talk about his negative qualities. She worries about Morlaine and takes him food each day. His singing was good for business and he was becoming a good friend before he went mad.

Encounter 2. Meet the Mayor. Anyone in town can point the PCs to Quince Rodder's house. It's relatively large and near the center of town. If the PCs don't find him there, Mayor Rodder seeks them out after a bit; news travels fast in Grassguard.

THE TOWN

Grassguard (Hamlet): Conventional; AL NG; 100-gp limit; Assets 1,150 gp; Population 231; Isolated (human 208, halfling 21, half-elf 2).

Authority Figures: Quince Rodder, male halfling Rng1/Com6.

Important Characters: Apple Aela, female human Com2 (apple vendor, Rice Rina's cousin); Brother Gregorio, male human Clr4 (Pelor/town pastor); Filo Gabgurgle, male halfling Exp6 (town blacksmith); Keerath, male human Ftr6 (town defender); Morlaine, male half-elf Brd4 (town bard); Rice Rina, female human Com3 (owner of the Green Bird Inn).

Others: Town guards, War3 (2); War1 (11); Exp6 (2); Exp3 (5); Exp1 (10); Clr1 (2); Rog3 (1); Com6 (1); Com3 (2); Com1 (185).

Notes: Although worried of late, the people of Grassguard are open and friendly to the PCs. They help in any way they can, as long as the PCs behave civilly.

Houses in Grassguard are mainly quaint one-story buildings, although important people live in comfy, well-furnished country houses. The town looks more mixed than it actually is, and its human and halfling inhabitants are strangely alike, sharing the same culture even to the point of dressing, walking, and building their homes. The DM should let the players move around as they wish while in town. Any important NPC with a professional trade (the blacksmith, the priest, the owner of the Green Bird Inn, and so on) can serve the PCs' needs for rest, healing, and restocking.

Quince Rodder, Male Halfling Rgr1/Com6: CR 6; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 4 in.); HD 1d10 plus 6d4; hp 21; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 11); Atk +5 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, short sword); SQ favored enemy (goblins); AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills: Climb +7, Craft (woodcarving) +6, Handle Animal +6, Hide +9, Jump +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Knowledge (local) +9, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +6. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Skill Focus (Knowledge—local), Track.

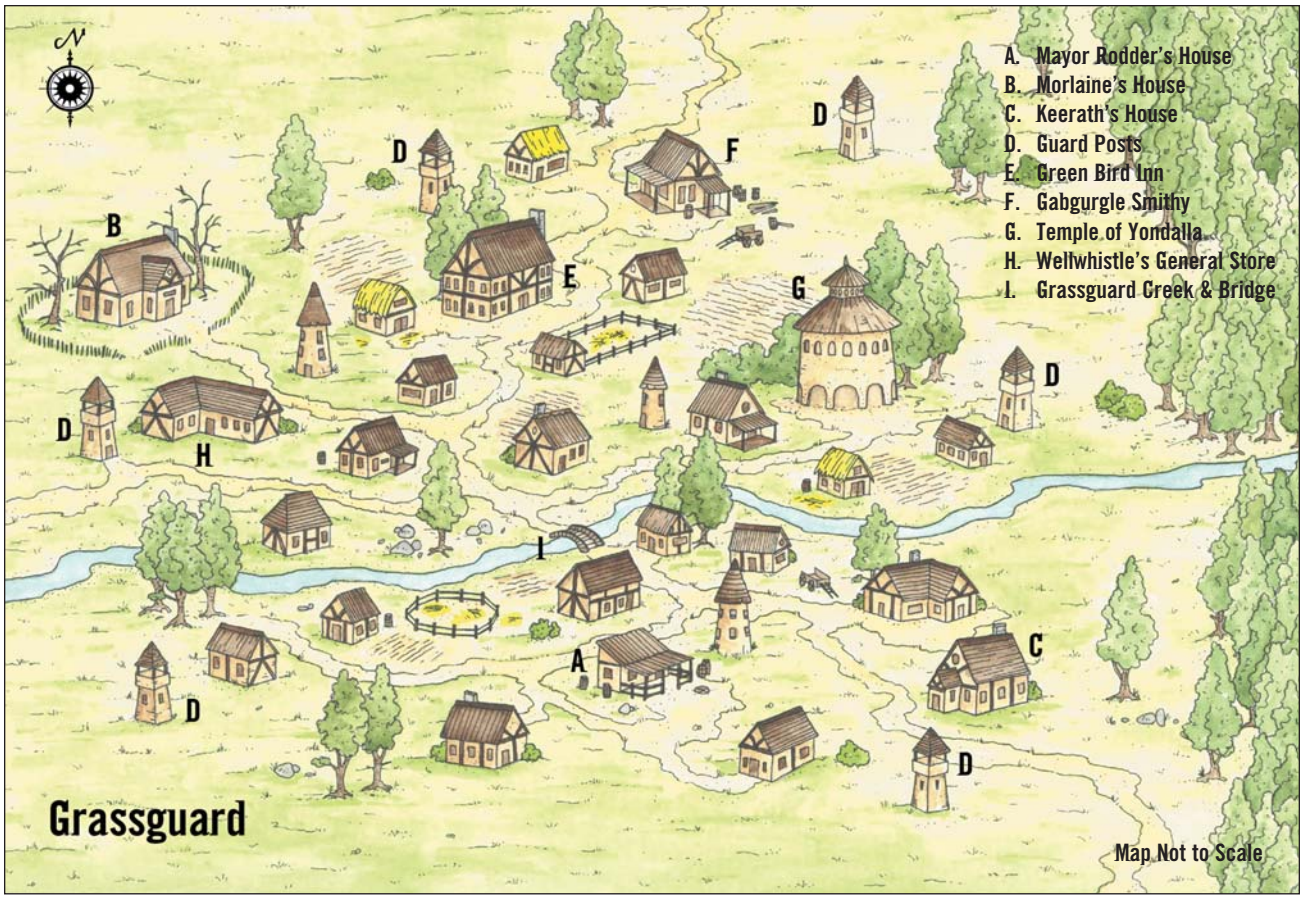
Possessions: Shortsword, symbol of office worth 12 gp, pouch containing 45 gp.

Development: Mayor Rodder doesn't seem like a settled halfling, but he likes town life. He sees Grassguard as an achievement in a world where so few communities manage to achieve peace. His main concern is for the welfare of Grassguard, and any help that the PCs offer in this sense is gratefully accepted.

The following can be used as part of Mayor Rodder's dialog with the PCs:

> "Greetings. I'm Quince Rodder, Mayor of this town. I take it you're here to help us catch these bandits?"
>
> "Navarro and his cronies ravaged the Earfield farm, not a day's walk north from here. They killed everybody; women and little children, you know? If they had moved nearer our town guard, who knows? I tell you, I sometimes wish I was an adventurer again. We must find them before they kill again. They haven't attacked yet because they don't know what kind of protection we've got, but it won't be long before they realize how poorly defended we are. We have to strike at them before that happens. Are you sure you're up to the task?"

If the PCs ask about the Wildwood or Morlaine, Mayor Rodder responds:



"Oh, the haunting . . . well, people talk, you know? It's poor Morlaine; he went mad, and now he's telling these weird stories. An unfortunate fellow, but that's not the real problem. The real problem's that some people actually believe him, you know? Bloody scaremongers. I wish I could do something for the poor man, but my people leaving town scares me most. Well never mind that, I'd rather discuss that swine Navarro."

If the PCs ask about a reward, Mayor Rodder levels with them—Grassguard cannot pay the PCs, so he advises them to count on the reward offered in the wanted notice. Grassguard can help the players with supplies, information, and the like. As an "advance," Mayor Rodder points them to Venia Wellwhistle and Filo Gabgurgle (see "Important Characters" in the town sidebar on page 13); if the PCs say Mayor Rodder sent them, they get a 20% discount on all services by both these NPCs.

Encounter 3. Morlaine. The PCs should encounter Morlaine as they walk by his home on their way to another destination or because they seek him out after talking to other residents.

Morlaine the Minstrel, Male Half-Elf Brd4: CR 4; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 4d6+4; hp 20; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d6/crit 18-20, rapier), or +6 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA spells, bardic music; SQ bardic knowledge; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 4, Cha 17.

Skills: Concentration +3, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +6, Knowledge (history) +8, Listen +3, Perform (ballad, chant, dance, lute, lyre, ode, poem) +10, Search +2, Spellcraft +3, Spot -1. *Feats:* Alertness, Lightning Reflexes.

Spells Known (3/3/1; base DC 13 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sounds, light, prestidigitation, read magic;* 1st—*erase, expeditious retreat, silent image;* 2nd—*invisibility, sound burst.*

Possessions: +1 studded leather armor, masterwork rapier, masterwork lute.

Read or paraphrase the following aloud when the characters approach Morlaine's house:

Nearing the outskirts of town, you spot a dilapidated house that can be described as little more than a shack. Once magnificent and stately, it is now a dirty and forsaken hovel. Behind the broken, rotted fence lies a muddy garden covered by dry leaves and overshadowed by dead trees. The two-story building has grayed with time, and its thatched roof has become a bed for weeds. Only the weak light from someone's lantern reveals that anyone might live inside.

As you stand looking at the place, a dreadful sound comes from inside—an awful, sad, horrible sound. It sounds like a true song of despair, but it hardly has a melody at all.

Development: The wailing is Morlaine the Minstrel trying to perform the *Elfwhisper*. This is the first time the PCs actually hear the song. For the encounter to proceed, the PCs must enter the house uninvited—Morlaine won't acknowledge their arrival nor stop his frightful chant until he makes eye contact with someone. In any event, if it seems like the PCs are not

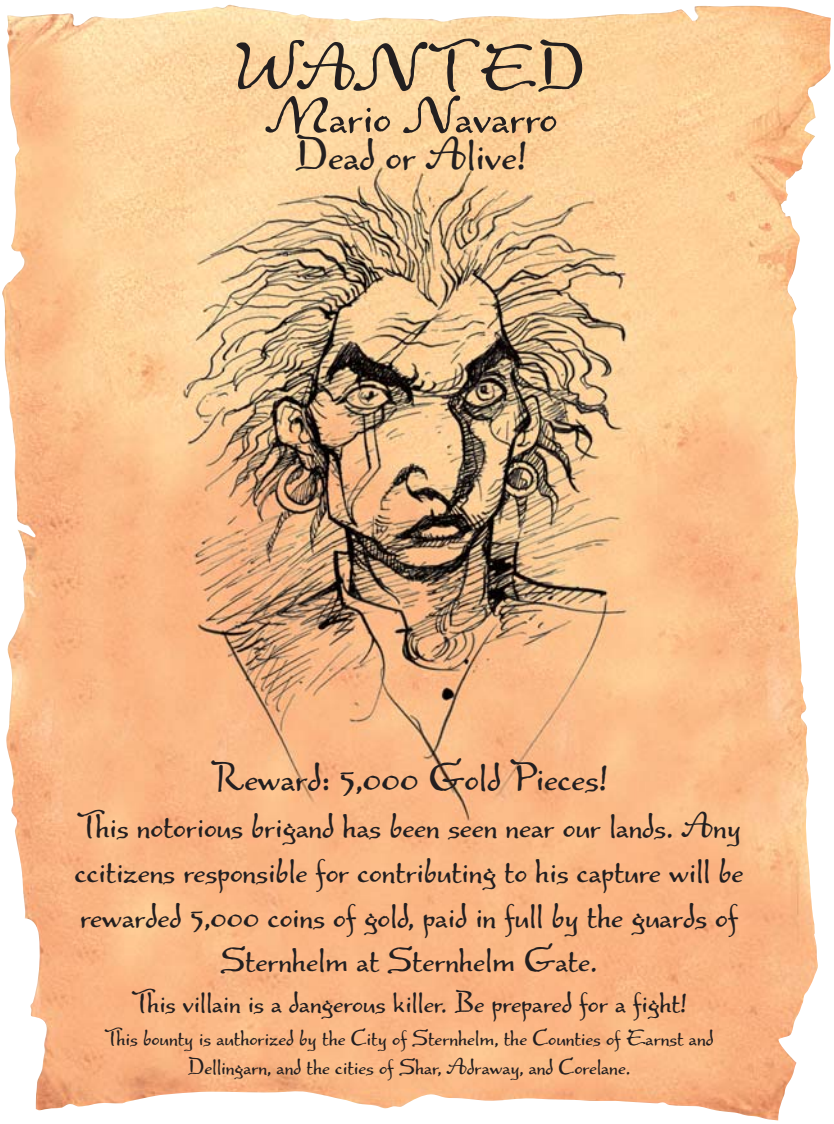
going in, feel free to make Morlaine stop early and invite them in—just remember his sinister, disquieting manner.

If the PCs enter the house, they find Morlaine in a corner of the living room, crouching over his lute and pathetically twanging its strings. Yellowed, mossy musical scores litter the dirty floor. Apparently they have been rotting there for many months.

Once Morlaine sees the PCs, he mercifully stops his hellish music and stands to greet them. Morlaine—it should be obvious—is utterly mad. He had the misfortune of wandering too far inside the Wildwood, stumbled onto Ilumenine's spectral host, and heard the *Elfwhisper*. His human blood allowed him to make it home alive, but his mind was nearly split in two by the experience. Upon returning, he attempted to destroy all his compositions and instruments, but his love for music stopped him from destroying his lute. He later tried to kill himself, but the spirit of the merry, lighthearted man he once was struggled to keep him alive, even through insanity. Now Morlaine lives in a dreamlike half-life, experiencing terrible nightmares night and day, and trying to recover his humanity.

Poor Morlaine can appear almost sane, answering questions in a normal fashion and acting as if the PCs were old friends come to visit. He remains this way until asked about his music or the haunting. Then Morlaine's eyes go wild, his voice drops to a sharp whisper, and his movements become jerky and frantic. Then, the mad bard tells the PCs about the *Elfwhisper*.

Use any or all of the following comments or answers as part of Morlaine's dialog:


WANTED
Mario Navarro
Dead or Alive!
Reward: 5,000 Gold Pieces!
This notorious brigand has been seen near our lands. Any citizens responsible for contributing to his capture will be rewarded 5,000 coins of gold, paid in full by the guards of Sternhelm at Sternhelm Gate.
This villain is a dangerous killer. Be prepared for a fight!
This bounty is authorized by the City of Sternhelm, the Counties of Earnst and Dellingarn, and the cities of Shar, Adraway, and Corelane.

• "No! Not my music! I don't want to talk about it; my music is dead, dead, DEAD!

"I . . . I saw the elves. I did. Thousands of elves, looking at me with their dead eyes, singing that eerie song, that dead song—singing, endlessly singing . . . Gods have mercy on me."

• "My music? My music is dead. Morlaine is sad. Morlaine is dead and so sad.

"The ghosts looked at me. 'Help us,' they said, but what could I tell them? What could I do? I begged them to stop, but they went on singing, singing that hellish music, endlessly singing. Ye gods . . . their voices, their voices . . ."

• "The forest is alive, I tell you, alive with the dead—hundreds of dead elves, and then that thing at the dark heart of the woods, that creature of gnarled knots and roots . . . It is the forest and elves are its slaves, driving wanderers mad—like poor Morlaine, who used to be happy."

• "Yes . . . There is a way to end the curse, there indeed is. There was the lady, the beautiful ghost lady. She sang with them. Among the damned singers, she sang best. Her harp, the lady's harp, can heal me. Its sweet tones can cure me, but now they have it. Cursed devil-women! Evil, hateful, awful witches!"

• "I'm half a man; that's what saved me. Had I been pure of blood, the song would have trapped me as well, would have made me sing the song. The song is a lullaby for elves. It sings them to sleep forever. It makes them sing in their sleep. Elves must not travel to the forest. They must not!"

• "The witches live in the mud. Yes, they do. They stole the lady's harp, but I dare not go back there. I dare not. The ghosts will kill me. This time not even poor mad Morlaine will resist the voices.

If there's an elf in the group, and all the dialog options have been played out, Morlaine suddenly notices the character, panics, and breathlessly cries out:

"You! You're an elf! You'll go with them! You'll take me with them! No! No! Out! OUT!"

This should effectively end the conversation. Nothing more comes from Morlaine's lips except moans and whimpers, nor will he go back to the Wildwood, even if it means ending his curse. If pressed, Morlaine will feel cornered, and he might attack the PCs in an attempt to escape them.

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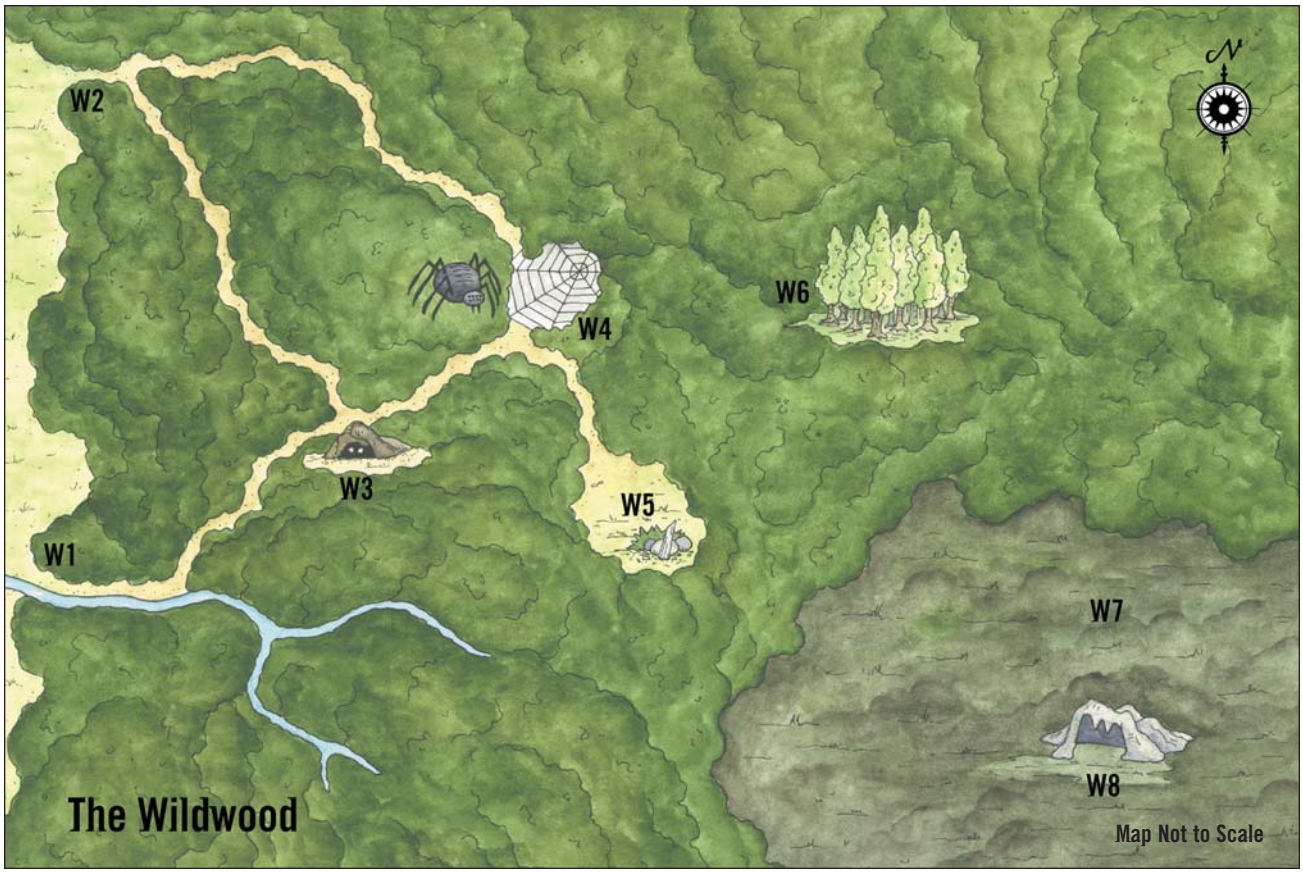


Encounter 4. Keerath. The PCs might seek out Keerath to question him about the bandits, or Keerath might "accidentally" encounter them as he goes about his business.

Keerath, Male Human Ftr6: CR 6; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 6d10+12; hp 50; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+6/crit ×3, battleaxe), or +10/+5 ranged (1d8+2/crit ×3, mighty composite longbow); AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 17, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +5, Handle Animal +8, Jump +4, Ride +7, Wilderness Lore +6. *Feats:* Far Shot, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Wilderness Lore), Track, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe).

Possessions: Masterwork battleaxe, mighty composite longbow [+2] with 26 arrows, hide armor, pouch containing 14 gp.

Development: Keerath should "stumble" onto the PCs before they leave Grassguard; he might become important later (see the "Continuing the Adventure" section). Keerath is a brave but prejudiced hunter who deeply resents being outranked by a halfling. He spends most of his time trying to gather the town's sympathies by making daring raids into the Wildwood and looking for ways to make Mayor Rodder look bad without provoking open enmity. He's nice and straightforward with the PCs, but his dialog is strewn with impolite statements about halflings in general (unless there's one in the party) and Quince Rodder in particular—especially his inability to deal with the bandits and Wildwood ghosts as compared with Keerath's militia (to which he refers as "my boys").

Keerath talks about himself, mainly, and his many deeds, without seeming overtly egocentric—his exploits are real, after all. He helpfully tries to answer whatever questions the PCs have, unless they mention Mayor Rodder.

Keerath believes in the forest spirits and the threat they represent, if only to provide himself with another reason to belittle Mayor Rodder. He hasn't run into any ghosts, but he has gone into the Wildwood looking for them—and for Navarro, who he says he'd have caught by now if he didn't have a town to defend.

The Earfield Farm

The Earfield farm is located a mile north of Grassguard. The PCs' investigation should take them here. Once the PCs decide to travel to the farm, read the following:

> This once-thriving ranch has been razed. Galloping horses have churned up the earth, and the air is still heavy with the scent of smoke and ashes after more than a week. Nothing is left of the buildings but charred rubble. It looks as though the bandits did a thorough job here—everything of value is gone.

The farm is not a pretty sight. The Grassguard militia has already removed the dead, but the ruins remain. A successful Search check (DC 10), or Wilderness Lore check (DC 10) for characters with the Track feat, reveals the vague tracks of a heavy group of riders setting off toward the forest. This roll can be retried every 10 minutes, as usual. Following these tracks leads the PCs into area **W2** of the Wildwood.

The Wildwood

Once the PCs have gathered enough clues, it should be clear to them that they need to head into the Wildwood.

The Wildwood was once home to a vast elven empire—Ilarnesil's kingdom. These elves ruled and protected the woodlands. Ilarnesil's kingdom is now forgotten, swallowed by the forest. It would have remained so, too, were it not for Morlaine's imprudent stroll into the heart of the wood, where he found the ghostly remains of Ilarnesil's people. The forest hasn't been visited for many centuries, and trespassers don't survive long.

Wildwood Features

When the PCs enter the haunted forest, read or paraphrase the following:

> The Wildwood is an eerie, foggy forest, badly illuminated due to the dark, dense canopy above and the tangled foliage that runs along the ground and creeps up the trees. The earth is soft and somewhat muddy; fallen leaves have been turned into a mushy, humid carpet over the soil. The trees are thick, dark, and loom overhead. Moss-covered roots writhe across the forest floor. You see no creatures, but you can hear birds calling in a distant tree. It feels as though there's something wrong with this place, as if the trees and undergrowth have just risen from the grave. . . .

The ghosts of elves trapped by the Ilumentarinen are generally found only in the Dead City (areas **T1-T3**), yet some of them have been deeply corrupted beyond any redemption (specifically, those who were evil in life) and turned into shadows—they don't sing the *Elfwhisper,* and though undead, remain free to roam the forest as they please. These shadows, combined with a large number of wolf and dire wolf packs, make the Wildwood a dangerous place. If your players are having too easy a time or seem bored with exploration, you might consider using random encounters. Roll on the "Wildwood Random Encounters" sidebar to determine what creatures the PCs encounter. Treat repeat results as non-encounters.

Encounters in the Wildwood (Areas W1-W9)

Upon entering any area from **W1** to **W9**, have the characters make Listen checks (DC 13). If successful, they hear someone following them, but see no one. The "shadow" is Morlaine, following them invisibly. He was afraid to go into the woods alone and didn't want to accompany the PCs, but he realized they might be his only hope for sanity.

If the PCs find Morlaine, he casts *expeditious retreat* and tries to run. If they catch him, he apologizes, "I wasn't sure. I wasn't sure. Poor Morlaine . . ." and asks the PCs to let him tag along. If they accept him, he behaves and cooperates with the group as much as possible. If the PCs refuse, he continues to try to follow them as long as he can cast *invisibility*.

If the PCs take Morlaine along, he tells them the story as he knows it if he hasn't done so already (Morlaine's dialogues and stats are found in "Encounter C" above). Morlaine also warns them against the Spirit Tree, a cursed spot in the Wildwood. According to Morlaine, the Spirit Tree lies due east from Grassguard; that's where he found the singing ghosts, and probably where the PCs want to go, despite Morlaine's half-hearted, whimpering pleas to the contrary.

W1. Wildwood Entrance. This main path for entering the Wildwood from Grassguard follows Grassguard Creek. The PCs would take this path only if they missed or ignored the tracks from the Earfield farm. The trail leads to area **W3**. PCs trying to find the bandits' tracks can discover day-old wolf spoor (Wilderness Lore, DC 12) but little else.

WILDWOOD RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

1d12	Encounter
1-2	**Wolves** (7): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 204.
3-4	**Shadows** (3): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 161.
5-6	**Dire Wolves** (2): hp 45 each; *Monster Manual* 56.
7-8	**Assassin Vine:** hp 30; *Monster Manual* 20.
9-10	**Boars*** (4): hp 30, 19, 19, 18; *Monster Manual* 194.
11	**Dire Bear:** hp 112; *Monster Manual* 58.
12	**Ravens**** (13): hp 1 each; *Monster Manual* 201.

*This mother and her adolescent young stand their ground if they feel threatened; otherwise they wander off into the woods to go about their business.

**These ravens fly away if threatened by the party, but not before they cause a huge ruckus, cawing loudly and angrily. Should this happen, there is a 50% chance that within the next hour the party encounters a group of wolves or shadows attracted to the area because of the noise (use the statistics presented in the chart above). If the party passes the ravens without threatening them, the ravens still make a fuss but the chance of an additional encounter in the hour is reduced to 25%.

W2. Ambush! The players enter the Wildwood this way if they follow the tracks left at the Earfield farm. They might also come to this location from area **W3**, following the ambusher's tracks from that location. The bandit's trail from the farm is still visible here, and it continues to area **W3**. Beyond the ambush point, characters with the Track feat can make a Wilderness Lore check (DC 12) to find the trail of the ambushing bandits leading from area **W3** to their hiding places along the trail.

Creatures (EL 7): The bandits lie in wait behind screens of bushes and boulders that hide them from view. PCs following the trail from the Earfield farm or from area **W3** have little chance to see or hear the bandits before coming in range of their surprise assault. The bandits are not moving much and are trying to remain quiet. Hearing them requires a Listen check (DC 16 + 1 per 10 feet from the bandits). If the PCs are talking or not trying to move quietly, the bandits hear them when they are about 140 feet away, long before either party is in range to Spot the other. If the PCs are moving quietly, the bandits oppose the PCs' lowest Move Silently check with a Listen check as described on page 71 of the *Player's Handbook*.

The bandits are actively looking for the PCs, and in the dense forest, they spot them automatically within 25 feet. They have a chance to spot the PCs at 50 feet away by making a Spot check (DC 20, DC 18 if there are six or more PCs). When the PCs are within 50 feet of the bandits, allow the characters to make Spot checks (DC 34) to spy the bandits up ahead. At 25 feet, the PCs would normally be allowed another Spot check (DC 18) to see the bandits concealed among brush, but since the bandits attack at 30 feet, this is probably moot.

Bandits, Male Humans Rog1 (9): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +2; Spd. 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +2 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow) or +3 melee (1d6+1/crit 19-20, short sword); SA sneak attack +1d6; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +4, Hide +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Spot +4, Search +4, Swim -1, Tumble +5, Use Rope +6. *Feats:* Dodge, Mobility.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, short sword, light crossbow with 20 bolts, pouch containing 6 gp.

Tactics: If the bandits aren't spotted, they launch an attack when the PCs are within 30 feet. There's a good chance the bandits catch many of the PCs flat-footed, and all nine fire their weapons, hoping to gain the benefit of their sneak attack. The bandits have concealment behind dense foliage, causing the PCs attacks to suffer a 30% miss chance while the bandits are in hiding. On the round following the ranged attack, the bandits draw shortswords and charge. The bandits hope to flank those PCs most hurt by their volley of crossbow bolts and take them out. If the bandits succeed in dropping a PC or two they continue to fight, hoping to kill the others. This ambush was planned to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the Grassguard militia; if the encounter goes badly for the bandits, they retreat into the woods, staying near the trails but hoping to hide from or outrun the PCs so they can warn their fellows back at camp.

Development: If the PCs can capture and interrogate one of the bandits, a successful Intimidate or Diplomacy check causes the bandit to tell them what he knows.

DC 20: The bandit is loath to tell the PCs anything and responds with lies to most of their questions. He exaggerates the size of the band, claiming that there are fifty men. He says they're staying five miles to the north (the camp is southeast). A successful Sense Motive check opposed by the bandit's Bluff check (-2 Charisma penalty) allows the PCs to catch him in his lie. If accused of lying, the bandit continues to try to Bluff the PCs, giving other erroneous information, but the PCs can then attempt another check to try to garner more intelligence.

DC 25: The bandit is sullen and resentful, but he's willing to admit that there are twenty more men at the camp. He tells the PCs the camp is located in some ruins a few miles down the trail.

DC 35: Truly terrified (if intimidated) or convinced the PCs won't allow him to be killed for his crimes (if Diplomacy was used), the bandit tells all he knows about the band and the Wildwood. He says there are nineteen more men, plus Navarro, staying at the camp in some ruins about eight miles down the trail to the southeast. He warns the PCs about the hole in the ground in the clearing at area **W3**, saying that other bandits saw a bear going inside (actually one of the dire badgers). He also tells the PCs that wolves have been shadowing the bandits in the woods; they have been traveling in large groups to keep the beasts at bay. If asked about forest spirits, he admits that some of the bandits said they heard strange sounds, but Navarro berated them for being superstitious.

W3. Badger Clearing. The PCs should arrive here from area **W1** or **W2**. There's a small clearing around the convergence of the two trails. A dark hole in the ground, about 3 feet wide, lies just before a sizable mound of dirt that dominates the southern part of the clearing. The horse trail from area **W1** and the Earfield farm continues through here and away to area **W4**. Characters with the Track Feat can make a Wilderness lore check (DC 12) to find the trail of the ambushing bandits, going through here from area **W4** to area **W1**.

Creatures (EL 6): The badgers remain in their den unless a PC comes within 5 feet of the den. Then one of the badgers rushes to the entrance to growl at the characters. If the PCs do not move along or if the badger is not placated within 2 rounds, all four badgers charge out to attack.

Dire Badgers (4): hp 30, 23, 18, 22; *Monster Manual* 56.

W4. Cobwebs. The trail of the horses and the trail of the ambushing bandits leads through here to area **W5**. The bandits never took note of the spiderwebs and always traveled in parties too large for the area's denizen to attack.

> It takes you a few moments to notice it—this area is a little darker than the rest of the Wildwood, as if something is blocking the sunlight. It might be a cloud, but something just doesn't feel right. There's also a weird sour smell.

This area is darker than the rest of the Wildwood; the PCs won't notice why until they have looked around and succeeded at a Spot check (DC 13): The foliage and branches are full of thick webbing. Of course, by then it's too late.

Creature (EL 4): As the PCs look up, allow them a second Spot check (DC 17); success indicates that they are not surprised when the ettercap swings out of its hiding place in the branches above and uses its web ability on one of the PCs.

Ettercap: hp 30; *Monster Manual* 88.

Tactics: The ettercap can use its web ability seven more times, so it stays in the branches above the PCs, using the web covered foliage for three-quarters concealment (the PCs suffer a 30% miss chance). It continues to attempt to web the PCs until all of them are immobilized, following them through the treetops if they decide to run. Once the PCs are trapped by the ettercap's webs (or it runs out of web attack), it moves down to engage in melee.

W5. The Dead City. Telenementelari (areas **T1-T3**), a city of the elven kingdom of Ilumentarinen, is located in a clearing in the valley below the ridge described below. Read or paraphrase the boxed text before running the next encounter:

> For the past few miles, the ground has been rising, and now the trail wends out onto the side of a ridge. Below you, the Wildwood seems to spread to the horizon. The gusting wind causes the treetops of this vast, tangled, and dark forest to undulate in great waves. You can hear the leaves rustling all around you; it sounds almost like the ocean.
>
> To the southeast, below the ridge and through a clearing in the trees, you see what might be ruins of some kind, half-hidden among foliage and trees. The path and the trail of the bandits' horses seem to head in that direction.

Creatures (EL 10): As they head toward the ruined city, the PCs begin to hear howls in the distance. A dire wolf pack has found their trail and is closing in. The dire wolves are moving at a rate of 100 feet per round—if the PCs can move faster than that, they can evade combat by going into the city (it takes 10 rounds to get there from the ridge); the wolves avoid the place, having encountered shadows in the city before. Otherwise, the pack catches them before they reach area **W5**, and the encounter occurs in the light forest below the ridge.

The PCs hear the dire wolves long before they have a chance to see them. When the dire wolves are 100 feet away, the PCs can make a Spot check (DC 14) to see them coming and take some kind of action, but the dire wolves are upon them in

the next round. If the PCs try to hide from the wolves, they have little chance to succeed; the wolves can smell them.

Dire Wolves (10): hp 45 each; *Monster Manual* 57.

Tactics: The dire wolves want food. They've been tantalized by the smell of horseflesh for the last few days but were wary to approach such large bands of humans. The party seems like a much more manageable meal.

The dire wolves concentrate their attacks on the weakest-looking characters. When the dire wolves drop a PC, one breaks off the attack to drag the PC's body away while the others continue to fight. If Morlaine is traveling openly with the PCs, the wolves don't hesitate to attack him. The dire wolves hope to get at least two characters, but they settle for one if they lose a third of their number or if the majority of the dire wolves are reduced to fewer than half their hit points.

Development: The dire wolves present a real threat; the PCs could lose Morlaine or a party member if they're not careful. This battle is meant to catch the PCs off-guard and soften them up before they go into Ilumentarinen. After the encounter is resolved, the PCs should follow the trail of the bandits into the ruins (area **T1**).

W6. Pixie Grove. Run this encounter if the PCs make an effort to track down Mario Navarro, even after discovering the curse of the *Elfwhisper*. As described in area **T2**, Ilumenine, through Morlaine, can point the PCs in the direction of areas **W6** and **W7**, where Mario flees after first encountering the shadows that slay his gang. The pixies saw Navarro pass through and mocked him as he ran.

When the PCs enter the grove, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

> Here the forest thickens and gets darker; strangely enough, the ominous aura you've been feeling since you entered the forest seems to lessen. The trees, flowers, and even the fireflies all convey the feeling of a more natural setting.

Let the PCs declare their initial reactions, then proceed with the following:

> Suddenly, you notice that the fireflies aren't fireflies at all; as they flit near, you realize they're small winged humanoids, about 2 feet tall. They're dressed in many shades of green and fly around you sporting wry smiles and singing some kind of rhyme.

Creatures (EL 9): The PCs face a band of pixies; they buzz around the characters reciting a riddle. The words are in Common, but the PCs have to specifically declare they're paying attention; then the DM can recite the riddle to them (see the "Pixie Puzzle" sidebar for more details on this riddle).

Pixies (6): hp 5, 6, 5, 4, 3, 3; *Monster Manual* 172. None of the pixies knows *Otto's irresistible dance*.

Tactics: If attacked, the pixies scatter as fast as they can, hiding then shooting sleep arrows. If there are no pixie casualties, they are content with trying to put the PCs to sleep and stealing their easy-to-carry valuables (mostly coins, gems, or small knick-knacks). If one or more pixies are killed by the PCs, they fight to the death using the full extent of their abilities.

Development: The pixies are not hostile—they just want to play a bit. If the players attack, they respond in kind. The PCs are better off leaving them alone. If the characters want to talk, they must solve the riddle first—until they say anything that seems to be an answer to the riddle, the pixies won't respond to questions. If the PCs answer incorrectly, the pixies give them one more chance before disappearing into the woods. If the PCs respond correctly, the pixies stop their flight, laugh, and congratulate whomever solved the riddle. They will now discuss any topic the PCs desire. The pixies can be used to tell the players a bit more about the *Elfwhisper* story. Stick to the following pieces of information:

- The pixies don't know Ilumenine or her story, but they know the elf ghosts come from "a ruined city not far to the southwest" (areas **T1-T3**).
- They tell the PCs the full story of the Ygwannach's appearance and subsequent control of the woods ("that mad spirit made our tree branches and nymphs all cold . . . they don't play with us anymore"). Any worshiper of nature should recognize that the Ygwannach is a perversion of nature from the feys' words. The pixies also know the Ygwannach has its sanctuary somewhere in the ruined city.
- The pixies can tell the PCs there's a covey of green hags somewhere inside the bog, but they strongly warn the PCs against seeking them out. They don't know that these hags were Ilumenine's traitorous sisters, nor that they were the ones who summoned the Ygwannach.
- The pixies know about Navarro; they saw some armed men set up camp near the city to the southwest. If the PCs haven't found the camp and are interested in reaching it, this could be their cue. The fey saw the bandit leader not long before the PCs arrive, heading deeper into the bog. The pixies mention that he looked frightened, which they found endlessly amusing. Some flit about with looks of mock terror on their faces, which causes the other pixies to roll about laughing and giggling.

If they learn the PCs are going into the Dead City, the pixies warn them against the Spirit Tree. They've seen many travelers in its vicinity, so they're familiar with the area. The pixies are meant to give PCs clues they might have missed (such as the Dead City, the bog, and Navarro's camp), and prepare them for the Spirit Tree (see area **T2**). The DM might want to let the fey warn the PCs anyway, whether they solve the riddle or not. The pixies know everything about the tree and its curse, but they don't know how to defend against the *Elfwhisper*. Finally, the pixies warn the PCs that the bogs to the south are a place of evil.

PIXIE PUZZLE

The pixies' riddle can be anything the DM has heard or developed according to his or her knowledge of the players' problem-solving skills. The following examples work, as well:

On metal I sleep, with rock on my side;
On air do I move, my fire's inside;
My blood will give life, my life will give death;
And you'll see your luck when I catch my breath.
Answer: a dragon.

Only the dragon's eyes do peer through my endless days;
Only the dragon's breath does blow through my endless ways;
Only the dragon's tongue does lighten my stormy portals;
And only the dragon's tears do I ever give to mortals.
Answer: the sky.

Treasure: If the PCs answer the riddle correctly on their first try and they show "good form" (by catching onto the game quickly and not interrupting the riddle nor the pixies' flight, not trying to change the subject until they've solved the riddle, and not attacking), the pixies give them a *ring of swimming* as a parting gift.

W7. The Bog.

After walking for an hour, you notice the ground has gradually turned soft and muddy—you're entering a swamp. The cold air and lack of animal sounds make it feel dark, eerie, and foreboding.

After just a few minutes of travel through the swamp, the PCs hear a man's voice crying for help.

Trap (EL 5): If the characters approach the source of the pleading, they find a man slowly sinking in a sinkhole. The PCs have 2 rounds to get him out. Finding and using a rope counts as a partial action; finding a stick or branch for the sinking man to hold on to takes a full round. After this, a successful Strength check (DC 13) pulls the man out (PCs can use the Aid Another action to help whoever is doing the pulling). Going in the mud to save the man requires a successful Swim check (DC 20). A character who fails this check begins to sink as well.

Sinkhole Trap: CR 5; no attack roll necessary (see note below); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Swim check (DC 20) escapes; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25). ***Note:*** Characters caught in sinkhole sink in 4 rounds (see The Drowning Rule, *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 85).

If the PCs save the man, they discover he's none other than Mario Navarro, who got lost in the Wildwood after trying to escape the slaughter of his men. But before the PCs can do anything with their prisoner, they have to deal with what led Navarro to the sinkhole: a will-o'-wisp.

Creatures (EL 6): While discussing Navarro's fate, the PCs see a flashing light floating in front of them, which promptly disappears; an instant later it reappears again, to follow with an intermittent blinking that produces a visual effect similar to a *dancing lights* spell. This is the will-o'-wisp.

Will-O'-Wisp: hp 46; *Monster Manual* 183.

Tactics: Since the "follow the light" routine rarely works with adventurers, and this particular will-o'-wisp knows this, it prefers to rely on a hit-and-run, appear-and-disappear tactic to confuse its prey. It tries to become visible in such positions as to be in reach of only a single character, and then disappear before other PCs can attack it, using its Dodge feat to maximum effect. Becoming invisible or visible during a round counts as a partial action for the creature.

The will-o'-wisp tries to focus its attacks on a single PC. If it manages to reduce a character to 0 hit points or fewer, it retreats, its hunger satisfied. Obviously, this doesn't count as defeating the creature for XP purposes. Mario Navarro is naturally a valid target; he tries to flee if he can (he couldn't care less about his saviors, especially if he sees they recognize him).

Mario Navarro, Male Human Ftr8: CR 8; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 8d10+16; hp 60; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22 (touch 13, flat-footed 19); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5/crit 19-20, *+1 longsword*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d10/crit 19-20, heavy crossbow); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +7, Hide +3, Jump +5, Listen +4, Move Silently +3, Ride +12, Spot +4, Swim -5. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Improved Disarm, Leadership, Mobility, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +2 scale mail, +1 large wooden shield, +1 longsword, boots of speed, masterwork heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, treasure map (shows the location of Navarro's stash in area **T2**).

Mario Navarro is a true scoundrel. He trusts no one and expects no trust; he's also a poor loser. If he feels he's losing the edge over someone (especially in non-violent situations), he goes childishly irrational until he can show everybody he's in control. He likes to mock those he perceives as inferior, but he hates to be mocked by others. He's also given to tasteless remarks and crude insults, especially if he feels that not doing so might result in a loss of face.

Development: If Navarro survives the fight against the will-o'-wisp and the PCs manage to stop his escape, they are now faced with a number of possibilities:

- Attack Navarro there, be it to capture or kill him. In this case, the bandit defends himself and tries to escape, fighting to the death if cornered.
- If Navarro is captured or slain, the PCs can return with him to Grassguard or Sternhelm.

If the PCs leave Navarro alive at Grassguard, Keerath and his men volunteer to take care of him, and the PCs can return to the *Elfwhisper* quest if they wish. Have NPCs ask if they found the "secret of the haunted forest," the origin of Morlaine's madness, or a clue on the lack of elves in the area. If this prompts the PCs to go back, proceed again to "The Wildwood" section.

If the PCs decide to return to Sternhelm and Navarro is still alive, he tries to escape every night.

- If Navarro is captured and the PCs decide to take him while continuing the *Elfwhisper* quest, he escapes as soon as he can unless the PCs take good measures to keep him subdued.
- The PCs can try to make peace with Navarro, at least until they get out of the forest. This being the case, Navarro feigns goodwill until he sees a good chance to escape.

W8. The Hags' Hut. When the PCs reach this area, refer to areas **H1-H11**, since area **H** represents a detailed version of area **W8**. They are separated only so as to be marked in both the Wildwood map and the Hags' Hut maps. Proceed to the "Hags' Hut" section, detailed below.

Telenementelari (Areas T1-T3)

Read or paraphrase the boxed text below once the party reaches the ruins:

This must have been a great elven city centuries ago; now it is reduced to heaps of vine-covered, rotting wood and piles of moss-covered stone. Nothing remains of its former glory except for a few moldy houses and bridges. Everything is wrecked beyond any hope or repair; time and the weather have taken their toll.

It's quiet here. The sound of birds and other forest animals, infrequent before, is now gone completely.

This was once the city of Telenementelari, center of the Ilumentarinen kingdom. Now only the ruins of its glory remain.

If Morlaine is still shadowing the PCs, he comes out of hiding and begs them to leave this area. If he already is with the PCs, he starts to cry and complain when the characters come near the ruins. He seems on the verge of a breakdown, and he frantically tries to explain that this is where the singing originates. If the PCs insist on remaining in the area, Morlaine remains with them, too terrified to face a trip through the forest alone.

Allow the party to explore the ruins for a bit, then run the encounter in area **T1**.

T1. Bandit Hideout. The PCs should discover the campsite fairly easily. Bandit and horse tracks lead to the area, and the PCs should be able to see or smell smoke from the bandit's campfires. A couple hours ago, several shadows converged on the bandit camp. Without the means to harm the incorporeal creatures, many bandits were dropped before the others fled. Those who managed to escape (Navarro among them) scattered into the forest. The remaining bandits, severely weakened but not yet dead, were tormented by the shadows until shortly before the PCs arrived. Hearing the approach of the characters, the shadows ended their sport by killing the bandits before fleeing. Read or paraphrase the following text, then give the PCs 4 rounds to investigate before running the next encounter.

This seems to be where the bandits set up camp inside the ruins. The campsite is completely devastated: Many bandit corpses lie strewn about like dead leaves. There's no blood anywhere, but the bandit's pale faces are frozen in hideous caricatures of fright. A chill wind ruffles your clothes and swirls the smoke of their dying campfires.

THE ELFWHISPER (EL 8)

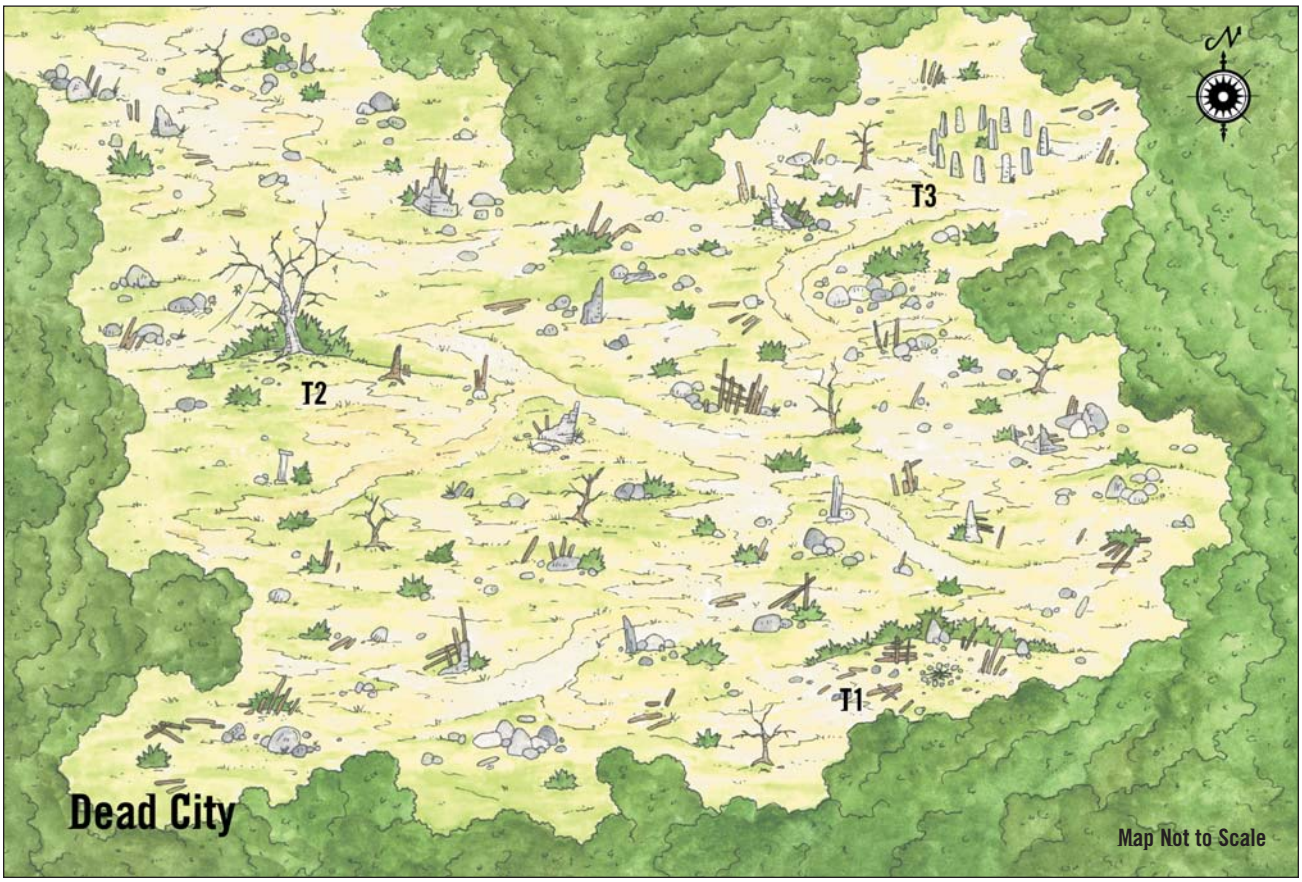
Ilumenine can use this spell-like ability each round as a standard action (when she isn't using her malevolence power, she must use it). Any living elf or half-elf within 120 feet who hears this song must make a Will save (DC 14). Success indicates that the elf or half-elf suffers 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage.

Elves who fail the save are also compelled to do nothing but move toward area **T2**, where the Ygwannach attacks until they're dead, after which their spirits join the ghostly choir. Elves of evil alignment who are drawn by the *Elfwhisper* and slain by the Ygwannach return as shadows rather than ghosts in the choir. Half-elves who fail the Will save suffer 1 point of permanent Wisdom drain.

Twelve corpses lie around the campsite. Most have weapons drawn and lying nearby. Navarro's corpse is not among them. The bandits' horses are gone. Most seem to have run to the south. Saddles and other gear lie in a heap not far away, attesting to the fact that the horses probably didn't have riders. There are signs of a struggle, and characters with the Track feat can make Wilderness Lore checks to gather more information:

Horse Tracks (DC 14): The horses ran off in the last 24 hours. They stampeded, breaking their tethers and charging off en masse. It looks like three bandits managed to put saddles on the horses and ride away, scattering in different directions.

The Struggle (DC 20): It doesn't look like anyone but bandits were here. They moved about as if fighting, but unless they were fighting each other, they don't seem to have had any opponents. Five bandits ran off on foot, all in different



directions. Two followed the horses. Another two appear to have run behind one of the bandits on horseback. One escaped on his own. All of the tracks were made in the last 24 hours.

Treasure: The twelve dead bandits have the same equipment as the bandits in area **W2**, but only eight crossbows remain serviceable—the rest were crushed by fleeing horses. There are also twenty-four riding saddles remaining. Strewn about the camp (in saddlebags and the bandits' personal gear) are personal items of value and foodstuffs from the Earfield farm (worth about 17 gp if the party cares to collect and sell it all).

Tracking the escaped bandits is possible, but the following encounter should be run first:

Creatures (EL 10): As the PCs search the area, the dead bodies of the bandits darken and fade away. Soon, there's nothing human left of them, as the corpses dissolve into a sickly black mist. The PCs just witnessed shadows spawning.

Shadows (12): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 161.

Tactics: This encounter is dangerous, especially if the PCs didn't rest after any previous encounters, but they should not have to fight the shadows for more than 2 rounds. At that point, the DM should read or paraphrase the following:

> Suddenly, the shadows seem to stop, frozen in their tracks. The temperature grows colder, and the undead fiends recoil as if frightened. A pale, blue light grows brighter behind you. Looking over your shoulders, you see five luminous humanoid silhouettes. They float over the battlefield, and stop in midair, hovering just over the party. The shadows seem to shudder, then they flee the clearing for the safety of the forest beyond.
>
> The light-forms slowly take on the shapes of elven men and women, led by an exquisitely beautiful elven woman whose face is horribly marred by sorrow. Her dead, pleading eyes turn towards you and she opens her mouth as if to say something; instead, a strange music begins as she leads her choir in an unearthly song.

Elven Ghosts, Com1 (7): CR 3; Medium-size Undead (5 ft. tall); HD 1d12; hp 7 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10) for ethereal encounters, 15 (touch 15, flat-footed 13) when manifesting; Atk +1 melee (1d3+1 subdual, unarmed strike) when ethereal; SA manifestation; SQ elven traits, rejuvenation, +4 turn resistance, undead; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will 0; Str 12, Dex 15, Con —, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 16.

Skills: Hide +10, Listen +11, Perform +7, Search +11, Spot +10. *Feats:* Skill Focus (Perform).

Ilumenine, Female Elven Ghost Brd8: CR 10; Medium-size Undead (4 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 8d12; hp 61; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10) for ethereal encounters, 17 (touch 17, flat-footed 15) when manifesting; Atk +6/+1 melee (1d3 subdual, unarmed strike) when ethereal; SA *Elfwhisper*, frightful moan, malevolence, manifestation; SQ Elven traits, rejuvenation, +4 turn resistance, undead; AL CG; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 15, Con —, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 20.

Skills: Diplomacy +15, Hide +9, Listen +18, Perform +27, Sense motive +11, Search +11, Spellcraft +15, Spot +12, Tumble +14. *Feats:* Iron Will, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Skill Focus (Perform).

Spells Known (3/4/4/2; base DC = 15 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, daze, flare, ghost sound, mage hand, read magic;* 1st—*charm person, hypnotism, message, sleep;* 2nd—*enthrall, hold person, silence, sound burst;* 3rd—*cure serious wounds, emotion, dispel magic*.

For details on ghosts' special abilities, see the ghost template in the *Monster Manual*, page 212.

Development: The *Elfwhisper,* although sung by the entire ghostly choir, only has its Wisdom draining and captivating effects when sung by Ilumenine. Part of her curse is that she must sing whenever she has left the tree, but she has managed to find a way to circumvent this aspect of the curse: When she has successfully used her malevolence ability, she can communicate in a limited fashion through the song.

Once the shadows have fled the area, read or paraphrase the following:

The leader of this eerie choir floats slowly toward Morlaine and makes an entreating gesture with her hands. The crazed bard stops his shuddering and moaning as he watches her, and then he slowly nods his head.

With that cue, the beautiful ghost melds with Morlaine's body, and after a moment, the bard looks at you with new eyes—eyes marked by long pain and suffering.

Morlaine begins to sing, but his voice has changed. No longer is his voice broken from screaming and weeping. Instead he sounds almost normal, with just a hint of a feminine inflection.

"Help us," sings Morlaine. "Please help us end this eternal damning torment."

If the PCs nod or verbally agree to aid the ghosts, Ilumenine/Morlaine beckons for the characters to follow. If Morlaine isn't with the party for some reason, he now steps forward from the trees to receive Ilumenine's spirit.

T2. The Spirit Tree. The Spirit Tree is the blackened husk of an old oak; inside it, Ilumenine's elven hosts sleep and wait for hapless travelers to come by. Whether or not the PCs follow Ilumenine to the Spirit Tree, read or paraphrase the following to them when they enter the area:

Nothing has prepared you for this sight; the bushes and thorns are so thick here that they seem to actively oppose your advance. The wind stirs a blanket of dead leaves on the ground, and cobwebs hang from nearly every branch. Nightshade bushes grow everywhere. Amid these twisted vines stands a dead, black tree.

Development: If the PCs have followed the ghosts here, some of them begin to flit into the tree, while others appear from its limbs and trunk. It should become clear that this is what passes for a material "home" for the ghosts.

Ilumenine then begins to tell her tale the best she can, in the only way she is able. While her choir continues the *Elfwhisper,* she, through Morlaine, sings three short passages that illustrate the events that led to the curse.

While Morlaine sings, his face grows hateful and his voice changes to almost perfectly mimic the voices of Ilumenine's family as they sounded so many years ago. This performance is especially remarkable, as the bard seems to be able to sing multiple voices at the same time.

"Death and pain and vile blister, let us doom our hated sister;
Let us sheath her cursed song, ever more than ever long;
Let us watch at once she dies, and then stop at where she lies;
Let us dance and sing all day, for poor Ilumenine!"

This chant is repeated softly once more, then Ilumenine/Morlaine continues:

The same voices as before, now sounding grimly sinister:

"Oh, Ygwannach, wrath of the forest! We are thy daughters! Our guardian, we beseech thee; come to us! For our sister has haunted thy silence! Become as the living hate of the forest; Slay, destroy, dance to our sister's voice! Bring down what you have guarded for so many centuries! Let sweet Ilumenine be the cause of her house's fall!"

Finally, in a sweeter tone, but one full of despair, the choir finishes as Ilumenine's tale concludes:

Two voices are heard amid a cacophony of screams and a rumble of devastation. One is clearly supposed to be that of Ilumenine, and the other seems to represent her father:

"Father . . . father? What be this curse come upon us in such a dark hour? What enmity hath doomed our house?"

"Cursed child, it is thy heavenly voice which hath summoned the forest's wrath! Cursed, the Ilumentarinen kingdom, all cursed! Thus Ilarnesil's house dies, and I rue the day I engendered a maiden with a voice that wouldst charm the forest spirits and turn them upon us!"

Here, witty PCs might make the connection between the hateful voices from the tale and Ilumenine's plight. If the PCs have deduced that Ilumenine is innocent and try to convince her of this, she disdains the notion with a shake of her head. Her sisters took her harp when she died, and though she knows they now live in the swamp, she doesn't want to recover the instrument for her own sake. She's convinced that she's receiving just punishment for her "crimes." She wants only to end the curse to bring rest to the tortured souls who have died from her song.

That the curse is her fault is completely untrue, of course; the three sisters keep the silver harp as a deterrent against their sister's freedom. The only way to save Ilumenine (and end the *Elfwhisper* curse) is to recover the harp and play it at the tree.

Though Ilumenine knows where her sisters hide (areas **H1-H11**), she won't go there. She doesn't know they have become green hags. She also doesn't know it was her sisters who actually lured the Ygwannach to her song and doesn't believe it if told so. She's too guilt-ridden to admit she was betrayed. The only chance to convince her of her innocence, and end the curse, is to bring back her silver harp.

As soon as the story is complete, Ilumenine abruptly leaves the sanctuary of Morlaine's body and resumes singing with her choir. A short while later, Ilumenine returns to the Spirit Tree with her choir, and nothing the PCs do gets her out again unless they bring the silver harp with them (proceed to "Ending the Curse"). Meanwhile, the bard collapses to the ground, nearly unconscious. Exhausted, he manages to gasp out some of the information he managed to winnow from Ilumenine while she resided in his body:

"Defeat Ygwannach. Strike the root—its power. End curse. Song eternal. Her silver harp—her sisters took it to the bog. It is lost. Her father's shalm, the harp . . . summon . . .

"No way to redeem Ilumenine. All victims—her voice summoned it. The Ygwannach—it ravaged Ilumentarinen. Chasing her, her song brought the curse . . .

"The curse can end. The harp—bring it. Sisters have it in the bog. But it is lost . . ."

Morlaine can tell the PCs nothing more about the ghosts. He can tell them, though, that Ilumenine saw a man fitting Mario Navarro's description running toward the bog to the southeast. She tried to intercept him to get his help, but her appearance only frightened him even further.

Allow the PCs two or three questions of Morlaine, making it clear that he is exhausted by his ordeal. If the PCs fail to ask about Navarro, volunteer the information or not; it should be

clear to heroic PCs that freeing the ghosts and righting this ancient injustice is just as important as capturing the bandit. After imparting these last bits of information, Morlaine slides into unconsciousness. Nothing short of 8 hours rest can fully revive him at this point. When he does awaken, he remembers nothing of the episode and resumes his erratic, insane behavior.

Creatures (EL 10): If the PCs have found their own way to the tree, any poking around the tree or its vicinity wakes the ghosts inside unless done silently (a PC must state that this is the case). If the ghosts hear the PCs, they begin to sing and emerge from the tree. The scene proceeds from there as it does in area **T1** when the shadows fled at the approach of the ghosts.

If the DM needs to play this encounter as a fight, remember there are dozens of ghosts inside the tree; it is not recommended to pit the PCs against more than a few ghosts simultaneously. See area **T1** for the ghosts' statistics. Award full experience for Ilumenine and her seven ghostly allies regardless of whether combat occurs: In this case, negotiating with the ghosts is better than defeating them.

Treasure: A Search check (DC 20) reveals a shalm lying amid the tree roots. A shalm is a wooden wind instrument, akin to pan pipes, consisting of twin wooden pipes protruding from a mouthpiece. This particular shalm acts as *pipes of haunting,* and it was once owned by Ilumenine's father; it can be used to summon the Ygwannach in area **T3** if the silver harp isn't available.

If the PCs pick up and play the shalm anywhere within the forest, it summons the haunting choir of ghosts. Events might then proceed as described in area **T1** if the PCs haven't encountered the ghostly choir yet. If they've already met Ilumenine, playing the shalm has no effect.

Navarro's secret cache is buried a few paces behind the Spirit Tree. The bandit chief's booty includes 5,000 sp, 1,352 gp, and another 1,000 gp worth of gems and jewelry inside four small coffers and one large bag. There are also three skulls that belonged to the bandits who helped Navarro bury the treasure. They were killed so they didn't reveal its location.

T3. The Ygwannach Altar. This circle of stone monoliths lies arranged in druidic ritual fashion in the middle of a forest clearing. There are thirteen monoliths in all, twelve forming the circle and a single, towering rock at the center. Each of the encircling stones has a cryptic sign engraved on it. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20) reveals the signs represent the twelve months of the ancient elven druidic calendar; any character worshiping an elven or nature deity (such as Corellon Larethian, Ehlonna, or Obad-hai) can add a +2 circumstance bonus to her roll. Grant a +2 synergy bonus to the roll if the PC is an elf, and another if the PC is a druid. The following symbols are represented:

(I) The Moon, (II) The Sun, (III) A Star, (IV) A Claw, (V) A Wing, (VI) An Eye, (VII) A Tree, (VIII) A Flower, (IX) An Antler, (X) A Lightning Bolt, (XI) A Bow and Arrow, (XII) A Fang.

The central stone has a small barbaric altar at its base; it consists of a stone knife and a small alcove, barely enough for a human fist to fit inside. There's a short rhyme engraved on the stone altar (written in Elven). It reads as follows:

> *When Shadow meets Sun, Water meets Stone,*
> *Wind meets Song, and Spirit meets Bone;*
> *When all this is done, then Evil shall come.*

This is a clue to what the PCs must do to activate the ritual: "Shadow meets sun" indicates that the monolith's shadow must lie across the sun symbol when the ritual takes place. "Water meets stone" means that a water offering must be made before the stone altar. "Wind meets song" tells the PCs that the *pipes of haunting* from the Spirit Tree (that once belonged to Ilumenine's father) or Ilumenine's silver harp must be played. "Ghost meets bone" means the *Elfwhisper* spirits must have been put to rest (see "Ending the Curse" below). When all of these conditions are met, the Ygwannach spirit is "drained" from the forest, and it is forced to manifest in the form of a huge mass of knotted roots and tendrils. Proceed to the "Fighting the Ygwannach" section.

Development: If Morlaine stole the silver harp from the PCs, they find his bloodied, unconscious body here; he unsuccessfully tried to appease the Ygwannach (it appeared when he played the harp). The harp is nowhere to be found. As soon as the PCs enact the ritual, the Ygwannach manifests in the clearing, the silver harp tucked inside its body. Proceed to the "Fighting the Ygwannach" section below, using the harp's powers as an extra special attack for the Ygwannach.

The Hags' Hut

Although the sisters call it "the hut," the lair is simply a slimy, dark cave. While inside, the PCs consistently find the following:

- Bones litter every bend and corner.
- Slime drips from the muddy walls and ceiling.
- Undergrowth and darkened roots protrude from nearly every wall.

Level One (Areas H1-H6)

H1. Entrance Cave.

The vegetation here is so dense here that the foliage hanging from trees merges with the algae floating in the putrid mud. Amid this quagmire of rotted vegetation, there's a huge cave; lichen floats in the knee-level dark waters at its entrance. As you approach, something huge moves by the cave and growls, "Who's there?"

Creatures (EL 7): The entrance is guarded by Morgo, a hill giant who serves as the witch sisters' bodyguard. He fell in love with all of them a few years back, and they have been using him to protect their lair ever since. Before the PCs can answer Morgo's query, he attacks.

Morgo the Hill Giant: hp 116; *Monster Manual* 98.

Tactics: Since there are few boulders in the swamp, Morgo has gathered a prized cache of projectiles that he keeps at hand near the cave entrance. He throws one as soon as he has a target, then wades blindly into melee wielding his huge greatclub. Morgo attacks lightly armored "softies" first.

Treasure: Morgo has a diamond valued at 4,000 gp and a piece of rock crystal worth 9 gp. Both stones are identical in appearance; a successful Appraise check (DC 15) is required to ascertain the difference. Morgo carries a *potion of endurance,* a *potion of clairvoyance,* and a pair of *boots of striding and springing*.

Morgo also has a strange gem hanging from his neck by a chain. This is a *hag eye,* by which the sisters scry on Morgo and all that he sees. The *hag eye* looks like nothing more than a smooth piece of polished crystal, but it radiates magic. *Analyze dweomer, identify,* or *legend lore* reveal that it is a scrying device of some kind.

If the PCs destroy the *hag eye,* the three sisters are damaged (see below), and one of them becomes blinded for 24 hours.

Development: After Morgo is defeated, the PCs can proceed to area **H2**.

H2. Main Cave.

Following the entrance there's a vast, dark and slimy cave. The muddy waters are filled with unidentified droppings and remains. There are no light sources at all, except what dim light comes from outside, which is barely sufficient. The cave's full size remains unknown because of this poor light, but it clearly continues ahead, although you'd need an alternate light source to explore that area. There's also a small exit tunnel to the northeast.

Creatures (EL 7): The sisters' other bodyguards stalk this area: a band of six ogres.

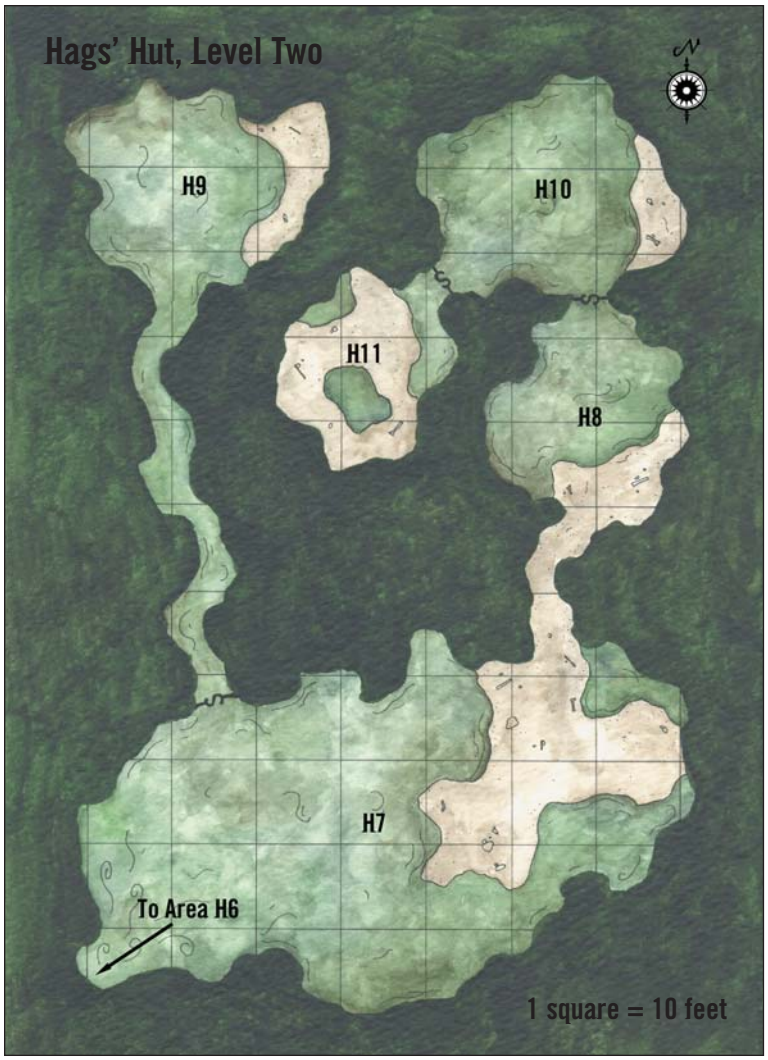
Ogres (6): hp 38, 28, 34, 20, 25, 30; *Monster Manual* 144.

Possessions: Each ogre guard has a pouch holding 25 gp.

Development: If the ogres die and the PCs leave the cave before finding the hags, the sisters use their *animate dead* covey ability to create zombies from the ogres' corpses (they can make three zombies each day). They command their new undead minions to attack any other intruders.

Creatures (EL 3 or 5): The zombies, whether there are three (after one day) or six (after two) attack mindlessly until slain.

Large Ogre Zombies (6): hp 29 each; *Monster Manual* 192.



H3. Pond.

This area is muddy and watery—a veritable swamp. The filthy water is knee-deep, and it bubbles fiercely. It must be an underground spring, sullied by the mud and filth surrounding it. The water flows into a tunnel in the north wall.

The water is so dirty that exposure requires a successful Fortitude save (DC 11) to avoid being infected with filth fever (see page 75 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

H4. The Guardian. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs reach this cave:

When you reach this dark cave, you see a surface of shimmering water, clogged by refuse and debris. The stench is horrible, but you can dimly see another passage on the far side of the 20-foot-long room, and the only way to reach it is through the water.

If the PCs wade into the water, read the following when one of them has passed the center of the room:

You feel the bottom gradually sinking until the muddy water becomes waist deep. After a while, you feel something like an undertow, only it's not. It feels more like the water is alive. Just as this realization strikes, the water begins to churn into a swirling vortex.

Creatures (EL 7): A water elemental, created from wastewater, was lured into cave by the sisters to protect the tunnel leading to their sanctuary.

Huge Water Elemental: hp 152; *Monster Manual* 84.

SA—Disease: Touching or being touched by the elemental infects the victim with filth fever (see page 75 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Ad-hoc XP: Award 10% more experience for defeating the elemental, due to the added challenge of dealing with filth fever.

Tactics: The "wastewater elemental" waits until the PCs enter the room before attack with its vortex power. If it manages to drown a PC, it wades into melee. The elemental takes full advantage of its water mastery power, and it will not pursue PCs who flee the area. Otherwise, it fights until destroyed.

H5. Stream.

This shallow, muddy stream has a weak current, and no banks to speak of. You don't want to speculate on the nature of the things floating down the river. The stench grows even more foul as you advance.

During the long walk through this stream (about 100 feet or so), the PCs see and feel rotted wood passing their knees through the slow current. Gradually, the objects get bigger; soon whole tree trunks and roots float by in the water.

Creatures (EL 8): Halfway down the tunnel, the PCs are surprised and attacked by crocodiles, who hide among the rotted trunks and roots.

Crocodiles (8): hp 21 each; *Monster Manual* 195.

Development: Once past the crocodiles, the stream flows faster; soon the PCs arrive at a small cascade (13 feet high), that drops down to the second level of the caves (area **H7**).

H6. Sanctuary. If the PCs didn't destroy Morgo's *hag eye,* read the following aloud while they approach the cave:

As you reach the end of the tunnel, you realize it's some kind of illuminated cave. Then, you hear multiple voices engaged in eerie chanting; the voices sound strangely familiar . . .

The PCs are listening to the sisters practicing their rituals. If the PCs destroyed Morgo's *hag eye,* they don't hear any chanting—the hags are not here.

Whether they find the sisters or not, read this aloud when the PCs enter the cave:

Unlike the other caves in this complex, this room is strangely furnished. There is a mystic circle drawn on the floor, as well as many censers, candles, and two shelves filled with assorted jars containing various animal parts.

Creatures (EL 12): (Ignore this section if the PCs destroyed Morgo's *hag eye* within the past 24 hours.) The sisters practice their dark rituals here; this is, in fact, where they await the PCs if the *hag eye* on Morgo's neck was not destroyed or if it was destroyed more than 24 hours ago. If the sisters are here, read the following aloud:

As you enter the cave, you also see three well-dressed, beautiful elven maidens, holding hands and chanting something around the mystic circle. They note your entrance and slowly finish their chanting before turning to greet you with smiles.

Shtara, Ilumari, and Imaril, Green Hags (3): hp 45, 51, 47; *Monster Manual* 115. The sisters have the full powers of a covey.

Possessions: If the sisters are found here, Shtara is carrying a *staff of swarming insects* (17 charges).

Tactics: The sisters use their magic to appear as they did long ago: as beautiful elven sorceresses. *Dispel magic, true seeing*, or similar magic bypasses the illusion. Remember that the PCs have no cause to think the sisters are hags; when they enter the area, the sisters try to sweet-talk the PCs, claiming they were prisoners of the hill giant. One hag attempts to convince two characters to accompany her to area **H3** (to eat at her leisure), while the other sisters ambush the remaining PCs 3 rounds after their sister leaves. If things go badly for separated sisters, they don't hesitate to use their *invisibility* to flee and regroup.

If the sisters are questioned about Ilumenine's story, they present their own version of the tale. Use the following arguments as a guideline, but feel free to elaborate.

- "Oh, yes, sweet Ilumenine. What did she knew about real feeling with her perfect melodies, her soft voice—everything given to her as if by birthright? What did her dead heart know of earning true love from those who loved her?"
- "We loved our father! We loved our people! We spent hundreds of years watching him cherish her for no merit other than her voice, while we were left to gather dust and rot! Don't pretend to fathom the depths of an immortal sorrow."
- "Evil? Evil, are we? More evil are those who deny love to their own children! More evil are those who ignore innocent pleas for love, to attend instead to the shallow sophistication of an affected song. Ilarnesil deserved what he got!"
- "We did not deal the final blow. It was the Ygwannach, our kingdom's guardian, summoned through the Ygwannach altar! He alone deigned to hear our humble pleas!

"There was no 'evil' in our righteous vengeance, and if you think so, then your short life spans won't ever allow you to grasp the true meaning of the word."

If the PCs aren't convinced by these words, the hags drop their disguises and attack to the full extent of their abilities.

The sisters begin combat by turning invisible. One then uses the covey's *polymorph other* ability on a less physically imposing target. Another uses the *forcecage* ability, trying to catch one or two targets within a 10-foot cube windowless cell (saving that meat for later). The third uses the *mind blank* ability on a spellcaster. The hags then converge on remaining PCs with *polymorph other* or *bestow curse* abilities, making things more complicated by occasionally turning invisible. Note that the covey spell-like abilities function only as long as all three hags are within 10 feet of each other.

MUSIC FOR THE ADVENTURE

"The Elfwhisper" benefits from musical accompaniment. If you can find a song powerful enough to function as the *Elfwhisper*, it greatly enhances the players' assimilation of the song. Eerie, soft, and dark music is highly recommended, such as most new age music or post-Beethoven Romantics (Beethoven's 7th symphony has an appropriate 2nd movement). If you could find it, Vitali's *Chaconne,* a nearly unknown baroque piece recorded by violinist Jascha Heifetz, is wonderful. If you prefer choral pieces, Gregorian chants are excellent.

Level Two (Areas H7–H11)

H7. Underswamp.

The area at the bottom of the cascade is more wet, cold, and slimy. there seems to be an exit far to the east, but with the deep shadows it's hard to tell if it is a tunnel or a crevice.

A secret passage in the north wall of the cave is hidden among lichen and wet brambles. It leads to the tunnel that ends in area **H9**. Not even the hags know the secret tunnel exists. Finding it requires a successful Search check (DC 20).

Creatures (EL 8): Halfway through this cave, the PCs are attacked by a black pudding that the sisters have allowed to live in the cave. They feed it enough to keep it from wandering.

Black Pudding: hp 108; *Monster Manual* 145.

H8. False Den. This cave has been prepared by the witches as a decoy to mislead intruders; their real den is hidden behind a secret passage on the north wall, but finding it requires a successful Search check (DC 22).

You get a sense of foreboding as soon as you set foot in the room. The cave isn't that big, but its earthy walls are marked with scores of cryptic signs and runes. Suddenly, you see three figures awkwardly wading through the filthy pond in your direction. They appear gaunt and clad in stained, somewhat tattered rags.

Creatures (EL 8): The sisters put these scrags (water trolls) here as guards; they are dressed in witches' rags and have been ordered to pretend they are the hags.

Scrags (3): hp 70, 65, 59; *Monster Manual* 180.

Development: Once the trolls have fallen, a successful Spot check (DC 15) or a thorough examination of the bodies reveals that the rags are poor disguises, and the "hags" are regenerating. Even if the PCs fall for the decoy (unlikely if they have already encountered the real sisters), they should be prompted to look around and locate the secret passage to area **H10**.

H9. Lost Cave. This hidden cave has been a part of the complex since many years before the hags came to live here. Its current occupant, a reclusive water naga, lives here without the sisters' consent, trying to keep its lair a secret. Read the following aloud as soon as the PCs enter the area:

As you enter this cave, you are assaulted by the smell of dank, damp waters, and find yourselves in a musty pool, strangely illuminated by a blue light.

In the center of the cave, the huge, scaled body of a blue dragon blocks your gaze. The light seems to emanate from it, and the creature is moving as if it were breathing.

Creatures (EL 7): This dragon is an illusion created by the water naga (using its *silent image* spell) to drive away intruders. If the PCs try to examine the dragon more closely, allow them a Will save (DC 16) to disbelieve, with a +2 circumstance bonus if one of the PCs succeeds and can aid the others.

Water Naga: hp 59; *Monster Manual* 138.

Spells Known (6/7/7/4; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, mending, ray of frost;* 1st—*color spray, magic missile, sleep, silent image, ventriloquism;* 2nd—*invisibility, scare, web;* 3rd—*lightning bolt, suggestion.*

Possessions: The water naga has a quartz crystal ring (1,300 gp value), a chest with 680 gp, and a *wand of silence* (22 charges) stored in its cave.

ENCOUNTER LEVEL CHART

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (ELs) for all the encounters in "The Elfwhisper."

Area	Encounter	EL
*	Morlaine, Male Half-Elf Brd4	4
**	Wolves (7)	6
**	Shadows (3)	6
**	Dire Wolves (2)	5
**	Assassin Vine	3
**	Boars (4)	6
**	Dire Bear	7
**	Ravens (23)	—
W2	Bandits, Male Human Rog1 (9)	7
W3	Dire Badgers (4)	6
W4	Ettercap	4
W5	Dire Wolves (10)	10
W6	Pixies (6)	9
W7	Sinkhole Trap	5
	Will-o'-wisp	6+
	Mario Navarro, Human Ftr1	8
T1	Shadows (12)	10
T1/T2	Elven Ghosts (7)	—
	Ilumenine, Female Elven Ghost Brd8	—
	The *Elfwhisper*	8
T3	The Ygwannach	8
H1	Morgo the Hill Giant	7
H2	Ogres (6)	7
	Ogre Zombies	5
H4	Huge Water Elemental	7
H5	Crocodiles (8)	8
H6/H10†	Hag Covey	12
H7	Black Pudding	7
H8	Scrag Trolls (3)	8
H9	Water Naga	7
H10	Flooding Room Trap	5
H11	Acid Floor	6

*Morlaine is not tied to a single area.

**These are random encounters in the Wildwood.

†This encounter occurs in area **H6** if the *hag eye* isn't destroyed, and in area **H10** if the *hag eye* is destroyed.

Tactics: The water naga stays hidden, even if the PCs start to poke around. Spotting the naga requires a successful Spot check opposed by the naga's Hide check.

The naga only attacks if treated aggressively. It casts *scare* first, then *suggestion*. It follows that with the rest of its spells until the PCs leave the area or kill the creature. It doesn't resort to damaging spells unless damaged itself.

If spoken to, the naga lisps (in Draconic; it doesn't speak Common) that it comes from the deep waters under this land, looking for its eggs, which were sold as a curiosity to a local merchant. However, the water naga cannot leave its lair due to a cave-in underwater, and it has spent the last months waiting for an opportunity to swim near a city and find its eggs. If the PCs are friendly and offer to help the naga, have the characters make a Diplomacy check (DC 18). If successful, the naga gives them with a cracked eggshell, explaining that they can compare the texture of the shell to identify lost eggs.

H10. Den. This area is much like areas **H8** and **H3**. However, the plant life is much more dense, and weak light filters into the room from numerous holes in the ceiling during the day.

Creatures (EL 8): If the PCs arrive here within 24 hours of destroying the *hag eye* Morgo was carrying, the sisters are here instead of their sanctuary (area **H6**). If the sisters are found here, their stats are almost the same as listed on area **H6**, with minior differences:

Shtara and Ilumari, Green Hags (2): hp 38, 42; *Monster Manual* 115.

Imaril, Green Hag (Blind): hp 43; *Monster Manual* 115. ***Note:*** See the *blindness* spell (*Player's Handbook*, page 180) for a description of the effects of blindness.

Possessions: Imaril holds the *staff of swarming insects* (17 charges).

Tactics: These are the same as in area **H6** (when combat is joined), except Imaril, the blind hag, is unable to pick a target for *mind blank, polymorph other,* and *forcecage*. She remains invisible near the center of the room, waiting for a PCs to enter her 5-foot square, then attempting to make a touch attack and use her *bestow curse* or weakness power. The other hags have full use of their covey powers provided they remain with 10 feet of each other.

Both sighted hags wait to ambush the PCs underwater; they attack with surprise unless the PCs detect them with a successful Spot check, opposed by the hags' Hide checks.

Imaril is trying to protect the entrance to area **H11**. Unlike her sisters, she's still enshrouded in the illusion making her appear as a beautiful elven sorceress. If she never gets the opportunity to attack and her *invisibility* is rendered ineffective, she tries to fool the PCs, giving her own version of Ilumenine's story as described in area **H6**.

Note: Even though Imaril has a 50% chance to miss in combat, her Blind-Fight Feat still makes her a tough opponent (see the *Player's Handbook,* page 80).

Trap (EL 5): Imaril stands on a secret trapdoor, obscured by the slime of the cave walls. The trapdoor leads to area **H11**, but if the PCs open it without deactivating the trap, it triggers a flood that fills the room in 4 rounds and the entire hut in 1 hour.

Flooding Room Trap: CR 5; no attack roll necessary (see note in area **H11** below); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25). ***Note:*** Room floods in 4 rounds (see The Drowning Rule in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 85).

H11. Spoils Cave.

This murky, oppressive, dark grotto is filled with ankle-deep mud. Algae covers the floor, and the entire cave is filled with rotting vegetation, lichen, and fungus.

Trap (EL 6): The treasure is well protected; part of the floor is actually a pool of acid disguised with an illusion.

Acid Floor: CR 6; section of floor (10d6); Reflex save (DC 16) negates; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 30). ***Note:*** Successful save means character dives to safety in time.

If the flooding trap in **h10** was activated, all of area **H11** (treasure included) also becomes flooded in 4 rounds. The silver lining to the flooding is that it dilutes the acid to the point of negating its harmful effects.

Treasure: The sisters' treasure lies in a heap on a corner of the cave. It includes 2,000 gp (unevenly distributed among five rotted sacks), six black pearls (800 gp each), a *potion of alter self,* a *potion of cure light wounds,* and a *potion of levitate*. There's also a rotting vine in the floor; finding it requires a successful Spot check (DC 16). One end of the vine is attached to the cave wall, the other seems to disappear into the floor (it actually leads into the pool of acid). The slightest tug causes the vine to snap from years of soaking in acid; whatever hung from the opposite end sinks into the acid pool to a depth of 10 feet. If the PCs find a way to retrieve the item hanging from the other side of the vine, they discover it is Ilumenine's silver harp (a *harp of charming*). A successful Spot check (DC 25) or Search check (DC 18) reveals that one of the tuning pegs of the instrument is actually a *ring of shooting stars* that the sisters tucked there.

If Morlaine is still present (whether hidden or openly accompanying them). He jumps forward at the sight of the harp, attempting to wrest it from whomever holds it (opposed Strength checks). If he gains possession of it, Morlaine flees, casting *expeditious retreat* as soon as he can to boost his speed.

If the PCs catch Morlaine, he struggles briefly, but soon surrenders and breaks out crying and whimpering. He grudgingly agrees to follow the PCs to the city again, but he tries to steal the silver harp again as the PCs leave the hags' lair.

If the PCs don't catch the bard, they find him upon returning to the Ygwannach altar (see "Fighting the Ygwannach").

Ending The Curse

If the PCs return to area **T2** with the silver harp, Ilumenine appears again and makes strumming gestures while she sings. The PCs can give her the silver harp or play it themselves. If a character has the Perform (harp) skill, he or she can make the check (DC 15). Morlaine is also available (if he's alive).

If either the PCs, Morlaine, or Ilumenine plays the harp, the *Elfwhisper* begins, but this time it doesn't have any harmful effects; it just moves listeners to the point of tears, and its chords become the relieved sighs of hundreds of freed elven souls. Ilumenine is the last to disappear (if the PCs gave her the silver harp, it disappears as well). If she takes the harp with her, she then shows the party the shalm lying in the tree's roots (if they don't have it already), and tells them that they will need it, pointing them to the "magic circle of stones; there, the true end for the curse awaits." (This should lead the PCs to area **T3**).

If Morlaine witnesses the end of the curse, he's cured of his madness, and with tears in his eyes tells the PCs that he can make music again.

THE YGWANNACH

The Ygwannach, Advanced Half-fiend Shambling Mound: Huge Outsider; CR 8; HD 14d8 + 84; hp 155; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 24 (-2 size, +13 natural, +3 Dex); Atk +23 melee (2d8+11, 2 claws) and +21 melee (2d6+5, bite); Face/Reach 10 ft. × 10ft./20 ft.; SA improved grab, constrict 2d8+11, spell-like abilities; SQ plant, electricity immunity, fire resistance 30, poison immunity, acid and cold resistance 20, darkvision 60 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +12, Will +9; Str 33, Dex 16, Con 23, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +19, Hide +20, Intimidate +7, Listen +16, Move Silently +20, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +8. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack.

SA—Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the Ygwannach must hit an opponent of up to Huge size with both claw attacks. If it gets a hold, it can constrict.

SA—Constrict (Ex): The Ygwannach deals 2d6+11 points of damage with a successful grapple check against Huge or smaller creatures. The Ygwannach can still move but cannot take any attack actions when constricting.

SA—Spell-like Abilities: 1/day—*desecrate, unholy blight, contagion, blasphemy,* and *unhallow.* 3/day—*darkness, poison,* and *unholy aura.* These abilities are as the spells cast by a 14th-level sorcerer (save DC 10 + spell level).

SQ—Plant: Immune to mind-influencing effects, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits.

SQ—Electricity Immunity (Ex): The Ygwannach takes no damage from electricity. Instead, any electrical attack (such as *shocking grasp*) used against the Ygwannach grants it 1d4 points of temporary Constitution. The Ygwannach loses these points at the rate of 1 per hour.

Tactics: The Ygwannach is nothing more than a perverted force of nature. It begins combat by using its desecrate and unholy blight abilities. It will use is poison ability in conjunction with normal attacks if it begins to feel threatened.

Special: If the Ygwannach has the silver harp thanks to Morlaine, it uses the instrument's powers as an additional special attack. The Ygwannach doesn't need to use its limbs to play the harp tucked inside its body; using it counts as a partial action.

Ad-hoc Experience: Award 125% more experience when the PCs defeat the Ygwannach.

Fighting the Ygwannach

Once the PCs have completed the ritual described in area **T3** (playing the shalm or harp at noon after having freed the ghosts and providing a water offering to the altar), the forest seems to blight and decay at a frightening pace. The Ygwannach's corrupting spirit is pulled from the surrounding woodland and forced to manifest as a lethal mass of gnarled roots and tendrils (see the adjacent sidebar for the Ygwannach's statistics).

Ending the Adventure

If the PCs slay the Ygwannach, it is forced from the Wildwood and this plane of existence. If Morlaine recovers his sanity by witnessing the end of the curse, the PCs should receive experience as if they had defeated him in combat. If the PCs caught or killed Mario Navarro, the Grassguard township offers to help take him to the Sternhelm authorities, where the full 5,000 gp reward awaits. Finally, award the PCs experience as if they had overcome a CR 8 encounter if they end the curse. This represents experience earned by recognizing the truly important quest and surviving the danger of the *Elfwhisper*.

Continuing the Adventure

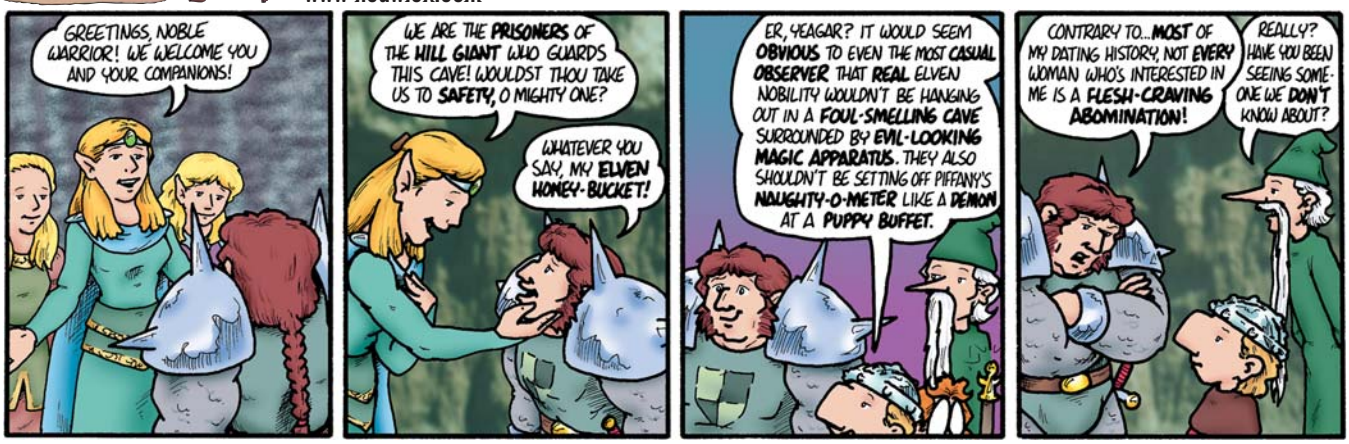
If Mario Navarro managed to escape the PCs, or if they put him under Keerath's custody in Grassguard, consider the following epilogue:

Upon returning to Grassguard, the PCs learn that Navarro has slain Mayor Rodder and taken over the town, using the ambition of Keerath and his men, who act as his current enforcers (eleven 1st-level warriors). Navarro's new gang keeps the rest of the town council captive, and they plan to spread a reign of terror on the surrounding area. Every Grassguard citizen has been scared into cooperating with Navarro. To defeat him, the PCs must deal with nearly the entire township. To do this without spilling innocent blood, the PCs must devise some very cunning plan.

Another good adventure hook involved the water naga (area **H9**) and its lost eggs. If the PCs take on this task, they might need to visit Sternhelm or another large city, looking for the eggs that match the cracked shell. Ω

This is J.C.'s first try at professional RPG writing outside of his native country, Mexico. He wants to dedicate this adventure to Eravon the bard, prince Aman Sharieff Abduel, and all the others who, unwittingly, playtested it.

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com


GREETINGS, NOBLE WARRIOR! WE WELCOME YOU AND YOUR COMPANIONS!
WE ARE THE PRISONERS OF THE HILL GIANT WHO GUARDS THIS CAVE! WOULDST THOU TAKE US TO SAFETY, O MIGHTY ONE?
WHATEVER YOU SAY, MY ELVEN HONEY-BUCKET!
ER, YEAGAR? IT WOULD SEEM OBVIOUS TO EVEN THE MOST CASUAL OBSERVER THAT REAL ELVEN NOBILITY WOULDN'T BE HANGING OUT IN A FOUL-SMELLING CAVE SURROUNDED BY EVIL-LOOKING MAGIC APPARATUS. THEY ALSO SHOULDN'T BE SETTING OFF PIFFANY'S NAUGHTY-O-METER LIKE A DEMON AT A PUPPY BUFFET.
CONTRARY TO...MOST OF MY DATING HISTORY, NOT EVERY WOMAN WHO'S INTERESTED IN ME IS A FLESH-CRAVING ABOMINATION!
REALLY? HAVE YOU BEEN SEEING SOMEONE WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT?

Totentanz

Dance of the Dead

by Bernard Mees

artwork by Michael Collins • cartography by Diesel

This adventure is suitable for a party of four 4th-level characters. No special character classes are required, although characters with high Will saving throws will have a definite advantage. "Totentanz" is set in a remote valley in a mountainous region. PCs might become involved in the story after hearing rumors that have begun to circulate in the inns, taverns, and hospices of the lowlands. These rumors speak of a blight upon a town in the mountains, but the cause and effect of the curse are unknown. Although designed for 4th-level PCs, the module can be modified for higher- or lower-level parties as noted in the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar.

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Background

The town of Luzern lies in a small valley of the same name, on a trail that wends through the Tronewald, a domain bordering the Yatil Mountains and the Vesve Forest. Once a fertile area whose people enjoyed peace and prosperity, Tronewald has changed. The walking dead have come to Luzern in the form of skeletons. They now rule the town and the valley around it. The protectors of the valley have vanished or been captured by the dead, and no one knows what brought these strange events to pass.

Long ago, the bastard son of one of the local nobles sought legitimacy and acknowledgement of his heritage, hoping to gain a noble title and possibly a parcel of land. Unfortunately for him, this sort of thing just wasn't done. After all, the nobles thought, noble titles are for the pure born. Led by the charismatic young baron of Luzern, the other nobles of the area drove the young man from the area, mocking his attempts to prove his family ties.

The experience left the ostracized young fellow on the edge of sanity. In a moment of weakness, he allied himself with dark powers, vowing to undo his humiliation, and demand the respect, of the nobles who had so mercilessly ridiculed him. He spent years of his life in seclusion, researching the perfect means of obtaining his heart's desire. His plans were not meant to come to pass in his lifetime, though, and the deranged and evil cleric died before he could find the item he longed for, the Totentanz Gate, and return to Luzern. His rage and hatred were stronger than death, though, and he returned in the form of a wraith who still hungered for vengeance.

Now a curse has befallen Luzern, a curse due, in part, to the late baron of Luzern's actions all those years ago. Having passed away hundreds of years since, his progeny have followed in his footsteps as paladins and ruled the barony justly. The most recent baron passed away ten years ago, and his only child came to rule the fief; guided by her father's former companions, she governed well. The young baroness, Lady Gudrun Talluth, has been taken prisoner by the undead, and her father's companions are slain or lost. Now the castle of the baroness is garrisoned by these strange skeletons, and the barony suffers.

The self-styled Wraith King, the undead priest who was once the discarded son of a noble, has returned to Luzern to seek his revenge. Although his presence remains a secret to the few remaining living inhabitants of the area, his handiwork is not. With the aid of the artifact called the Totentanz Gate, he has converted the living denizens of Luzern into undead who live a grim mockery of their former lives. These undead perform the labors of the townsfolk, but they do not do them well. The fields are neglected, fences lie unmended, and the streets of the town grow rutted and weary. The last living inhabitants of Luzern have mostly fled to parts unknown. It is in this state that the characters find Luzern when they arrive.

Information on the Totentanz Gate can be found in an ancient book hidden in town, and the baroness is waiting for rescue from her grim fate as the bride of the Wraith King, who still hopes to legitimize his claim to the nobility by marrying the daughter of his hated enemy. Lady Talluth can provide some information on this mysterious figure.

Arriving in the valley, the characters soon discover the presence of the undead. They appear to behave as normal people: they work, tire, and at night return to their homes. Indeed they appear almost unremarkable (if one can overlook the fact that they are obviously dead).

For the Players

The adventure begins when the characters hear rumors of a curse afflicting the barony of Luzern. Mindful of these rumors, travelers

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Totentanz" is designed for 4th-level PCs, but it can be modified for parties of different sizes or levels. Consider adapting the adventure as follows:

1st- to 3rd-level PCs: Run the adventure as written but with the following changes:

- Reduce the number of skeletons to generally match the average level of your group. If you have a 2nd-level group, make the average skeleton encounter EL 2 (six skeletons).
- Make the Wild Man a 2nd-level warrior (EL 5).
- Make Taurian a 1st-level warrior (EL 4).
- Make the Wraith King a normal wraith (no cleric levels).

5th- to 6th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written but with the following changes:

- Make the Wild Man more aggressive: If the PCs say even a word to him, he attacks.
- Change the skeletons in areas T8, K13, C1, and C9 to ghouls.
- Make Taurian a 3rd-level fighter instead of a 3rd-level warrior. Power Attack and Weapon Focus are good additional feats.

7th- to 8th-level PCs: In addition to the changes above, add the following modifications:

- Make the Wild Man hostile. In addition, give him a 3rd-level werewolf warrior companion.
- Instead of ghouls, make the skeletons in areas T8, K13, C1, and C9 ghasts and shadows.
- Give Taurian an extra level of fighter.
- Make the Wraith King a 7th-level cleric.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure. Consult page 170 in the DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide (Tables 7-2, 7-3, and 7-4) to determine treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

now avoid the barony, taking other routes to pass through the forest. The trail to Luzern is well known, so the characters can easily find people at hospices and inns in the lowlands who can tell them how to find the valley. Not much, however, can be gleaned as to the nature of the curse. The barony has not been the subject of rumor in the past, and the feats of its late ruler are not known in these parts. Some tavern owners and merchants speak of an evil plague that afflicts the region. Others avoid all mention of Luzern as if the very name were cursed. No word has come from the barony since the first rumors of its unrest began to circulate nearly a year ago.

The journey to Luzern takes the adventurers into a valley nestled between the mountains. The trail wends its way through the valley, past scattered settlements and through wilder lands. As they near Luzern, the characters might hear more rumors of the affliction that has plagued the barony.

There are three settlements that lie on the way to Luzern; in each, the folk have rumors to share regarding Luzern. Each of these bits of information can be gained with a successful Gather Information check (DC 12). Although normally quite willing to gossip about their nearby neighbor, the citizens of these hamlets have grown close-mouthed about the city.

- At the village of Thun, if they inquire about the barony, the characters hear of its wealth and the treasures said to be hidden in the castle there.
- At Chur, they might be told of a church that stands in the town with its bright windows and golden ceiling, and the piety of the folk who live there.
- In Bregentz, willing ears hear of a silence in the streets of the once friendly town of Luzern, of unkempt fields and stray cows, and people stolen in the night.

With a Gather Information check result of 18 or better in Thun, the PCs actually manage to locate a former resident of Luzern. In Chur, the DC drops to 16, and in Bregentz, to 14. The encounter with these displaced folk goes something like this:

"Yeah, I lived in Luzern until the people started vanishin' and the dead started walkin' and dancin' in the streets.

"It started when a few folks just up and vanished. Some thought they'd decided to move on, but they left all their goods. Then more went missin' the next night. Then some more the night after.

"After the third night of disappearances, some of us went to the castle to see the baroness. She was good to us, see?

"But the baroness didn't come to see us. Nope. The skeletons did. Dressed in her livery, they were, just like they were her guards, but dead. Well, we ran.

"Some of the menfolk thought they were tough and decided to try to rescue the baroness—they thought she might still be alive. About thirty of them went, and they didn't come back.

"That's when folk started packin' up and headin' out. It meant leavin' everything they had—land, homes, most valuables—but it also meant survivin'. Some of us stayed a little longer, but then the dead started movin' in to the homes vacated by the missing. They were skeletons, mark my words, and they started dressin' and actin' almost like they were livin' folk. The weirdest part was the dancin'. Each night, they'd take out all these instruments and have a parade through town, honkin' and beatin' on the things with a noise so harsh and shrill it made milk curdle.

That was the last straw for me and mine. We packed up the next day for greener pastures. Luzern's a ghost town, now, friend. Don't go near it."

No one in the nearby villages has visited Luzern since the past winter. Only travelers who have come through the barony have brought word in the last few months. Even they have become scarce of late.

Refer to the "Encounters in the Tronewald" sidebar to run the journey to Luzern.

Luzern

A river of the deepest blue runs through the vale of Luzern. On either side mountains rise up out of the morning mists that begin to fade with the warmth of the sun. Past the trees of the Tronewald, the scene changes as grassy meadows and golden fields replace the verdant forest. It is clear even from here that something is amiss. No cattle, pigs, or goats can be seen in the pens and fallow fields. Indeed, the fences are unmended, and wild animals and birds foray through crops ripe for harvest that lie seemingly untended in the fields.

As you head toward Luzern, you see a farmer harvesting

ENCOUNTERS IN THE TRONEWALD

The adventurers have several encounters as they journey to the barony. It will take at least a full week to travel the forest trail to Luzern. Each of the following encounters happens at the proper spot on the map. If you want to substitute another encounter suitable to your campaign, this is a good opportunity.

1. Creatures (EL 6): A pack of wolves attacks; the wolves flee if one-half their number are injured or slain.

Wolves (6): hp 13 each; Monster Manual 204.

2. Creature (EL —): The party meets a bird catcher named Tamino who sets nets to capture birds that he sells at fairs in the lowlands. If asked of Luzern, he replies that he does not travel as far as Luzern often, as he does not think the people there would buy his birds if he did. If the strange curse is mentioned, Tamino answers only with a gasp and a nod. He is not prone to talking about anything other than birds and music.

Tamino the Bird-Catcher, Male Human Brd2: CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 2d6+2; hp 12; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10); Atk +1 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger), or +2 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); SA bardic music, spells; SQ bardic knowledge; AL CG; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +7, Craft (trapmaking) +7, Diplomacy +7, Listen +4, Perform +7, Spellcraft +7, Tumble +6. Feats: Dodge, Endurance.

Spells Known (3/1; save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—dancing lights, mending, resistance; 1st—expeditious retreat.

Possessions: Dagger, bird traps, silver box (Tamino's only treasure is this small silver box that plays a short tune when opened. Tamino doesn't wish to talk about his clockwork toy, although it could fetch as much as 500 gp at market).

3. Creature (EL 4): An ogre fighter stands by the trail here, charging a toll on all who would pass. This unsavory creature calls himself Sir Waltherus and wears a broken helmet and a shirt of mail taken from a knight he once bested. He is inclined to ask for as much as he thinks he can extort from the passer-by and delights in humiliating his victims. The favorite demands of Sir Waltherus include the swords of warriors or the holy symbols of clerics. He might even demand beards as a toll.

Sir Waltherus, Male Ogre Ftr2: CR 4; Large Giant (10 ft. tall); HD 4d8+8 plus 2d10+4; hp 44; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (touch 9, flat-footed 17); Atk +10 melee (2d6+7, huge greatclub); Reach 10 ft.; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +5, Jump +5, Listen +2, Spot +2. Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub).

Possessions: Chain shirt, helmet, huge greatclub, and Treasure.

Treasure: Behind a nearby rock the ogre has stashed a bag that holds 317 gp, 32 sp, 6 cp, and 3 dead hares.

4. Creature (EL 8): The party sees a bearded man dressed in rags approaching. He seeks to avoid the party and does not answer questions willingly. Travelers in these parts call him the Wild Man and give him a wide berth. If angered, he transforms into a lupine beast and attacks.

The Wild Man, Male Werewolf War5: CR 8; Medium-size Shapechanger (5 ft. 10 in. tall); AL CE; three alternate forms.

Human form: HD 5d8+10; hp 37; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 10, flat-footed 12); Atk +6 melee (1d3+1 subdual, unarmed strike); SA wolf empathy; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +6, Control Shape +6, Craft (woodcarving) +6, Jump +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +4, Search +5, Spot +4. Feats: Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Unarmed Strike.

Hybrid Form: HD 5d8+20; hp 47; Init +6; Spd 50 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +7 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA trip, curse of lycanthropy, wolf empathy; SQ scent, damage reduction 15/silver; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +6, Control Shape +6, Craft (woodcarving) +6, Hide +3, Jump +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +13, Move Silently +4, Search +9, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +0*. Feats: Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Weapon Finesse (bite).

*Wolves receive a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Wolf Form: As hybrid form, except the Wild Man can't use his Craft skill while in wolf form.

SA—Wolf Empathy (Ex): Can communicate and empathize with wolves or dire wolves, granting a +4 racial bonus to checks when influencing a wolf's attitude and allowing the communication of simple concepts and commands.

SA—Curse of Lycanthropy (Su): Any humanoid hit by the werewolf's bite attack in animal form must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract lycanthropy.

SA—Trip (Ex): A werewolf that hits with a bite can attempt to trip as a free action (see page 130 in the Player's Handbook) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the werewolf.

SQ—Alternate Form (Su): Can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of a wolf as though using a polymorph self spell as a standard action; upon assuming either form, he regains hit points as if having rested for a day.

SQ—Damage Reduction (Ex): A lycanthrope in animal or hybrid form gains damage reduction 15/silver.

The Wild Man is the master of a number of werewolves in the Tronewald. The strain of lycanthropy that produced the werewolves of the Tronewald is part of an old curse.

5. Creature (EL —): An old fur trader carrying his traps meets the characters on the road. He wears a green tunic, a gray cloak with wolf-fur trim, and a gray hood. Guntrum can tell the PCs that the people of Luzern have changed. Some say they are under the influence of an enchantment. He knows that the old baron is dead, but he has not entered the town for some time. He also knows that a wizard dwells in the valley, but the town does not interest him, as few of the folk there buy his furs.

Guntrum the Fur Trader, Male Human War3: CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 11 in. tall); HD 3d10+6; hp 23; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10); Atk +3 melee (1d6/crit x3, handaxe); AL CG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 13.

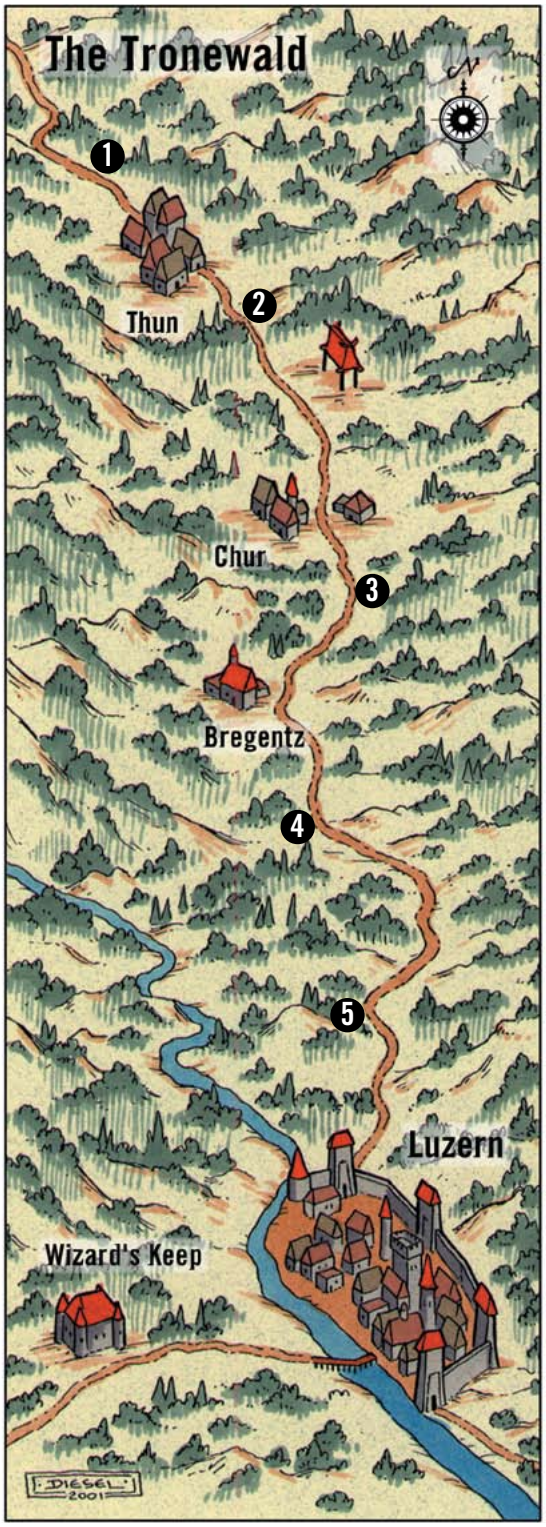
Skills: Disable Device +4, Handle Animal +7, Intuit Direction +5, Profession (fur trader) +5, Wilderness Lore +5. Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Handaxe, dagger, animal traps, and 7 gp.

a crop of rye. He makes slow but confident strokes with his scythe. Further along, other figures can be seen. Each works at a deliberate pace.

If the characters don't approach the farmers, allow them a Spot check (DC 15) to notice their skeletal appearance.

If the PCs approach the farmers, continue with the following text:



As you approach the farmer, none of the other figures in the fields stop to take notice. The farmer wears a loose woolen tunic, dyed blue, and a brimmed felt hat of scarlet. Although his dress and behavior seem appropriate for a normal farmer, they cannot hide his skeletal appearance. All the other figures working in the fields are also skeletons.

Like skeletons created by an animate dead spell, the undead of Luzern are completely mindless, but their creation by the Wraith King has left them with an imprint of their former lives. This results in the desultory application the skeletons have shown to the lives they once led. The skeletons are otherwise normal in behavior, and unless otherwise specified, bear the statistics provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar.

Most skeleton men do not attack unless one of them is attacked first, in which case all skeletons within line of sight rush to defend their fellow "townsfolk."

DM Note: Attacking the skeletons could quickly lead to an overwhelming situation for the PCs if they decide to start a battle in the town square or another heavily populated area. Make an effort to point out that the skeletons aren't harassing anyone, and concentrate on the eerie feeling of mystery.

The only creatures active in the valley outside the town of Luzern are farmers, all of which are skeletons. As the sun sets, each farmer leaves the fields and returns to its dwelling in the town. The only other building in the valley, save for the town itself and a few barns, is a castle of white stone. The river separates it from the trail, however, and the only place of crossing is a bridge leading from within the confines of the town.

The walled town of Luzern has five gates, one of which lies at the end of the forest trail. At the north end of town, twin spires mark some large building, and a castle overlooks the town's main square. Upstream from the bridge, boats are moored by the river, although none seems in use. The gates lie open, and a few lone figures can be seen coming and going. No sentries guard the gate or walk the walls.

The trail from the Tronewald leads up to the Whitegate, a three-story tower that guards the entrance to the town. A lone figure piles harvested rye from a nearby field, taking it through the gate, and returning after a time for another load. The Whitegate itself is uninhabited. A shutter to a window on the third floor swings on its hinge in the breeze, but the tower is otherwise silent. There are no signs of a siege or battle.

Inside Luzern the streets are mostly empty. Skeletons dressed in the manner typical of the folk of the Tronewald walk the streets but make no tokens of address. There don't appear to be humans left in town, but that isn't entirely true.

One last family has decided that moving isn't an option. Elner Poortis isn't going to budge, and neither is his family as long as he has a say in the matter. As a result, Elner, his wife Yurvihiun, and their two daughters Wesal and Firthis have holed up in their house. The three women are miserable and frightened, and not a day goes by that they don't plead with Elner to leave. So far, their loyalty to family has kept them by his side, but Yurvihiun has nearly reached her breaking point and is contemplating a break for safety.

T1. Castle. The gate to this gray limestone keep remains closed during the day. No gonfalons or other signs of who holds the castle are apparent, though the device of a falcon on a shield is graven over a number of the windows on the second floor. Any window large enough to be entered by a climbing or flying character is shuttered (Break DC 20), and no sounds emanate from within. It is, however, inhabited by the undead; any attempts to break in are resisted vigorously by the skeletal garrison. A description of the rooms inside the castle follows in the section entitled "Rescuing the Baroness."

T2. Lady Church. The building with the twin spires seen outside the town is the Lady Church. It is dedicated to the memory of a

lawful good holy woman whom the folk of Luzern revere as a saint. The cleric, Friar Farold, formerly resident in the nearby parsonage, has disappeared. Now the doors of the church are held shut with locks and chains.

Chained Wooden Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 40; Break (DC 23); Open Lock (DC 25). The chains have a hardness of 10 and 15 hp.

Creatures (EL 5): The Lady Church is haunted by two wights.

Wights (2): hp 30, 23; Monster Manual 183.

SQ—Totentanz (Su): The wights are under the influence of a desecrate spell cast at 10th level. This gives them a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Turning checks in this area suffer a -3 profane penalty.

Ad-hoc XP: Award 10% more experience for each wight; the desecrate effect makes them tougher than normal.

Development: The church has been defiled by the wights. The holy items are all broken or lost, the bells in the twin bell towers have fallen and shattered, and the wall paintings and mosaics depicting the Lady and her followers are covered with soot and grime. Even the great stained-glass windows have been smashed and filled up with sack-cloth and rags to keep out the light of day. Nevertheless, once light is returned to the church, other decorations can be seen. Bosses on the painted blue ceiling are plated with gold, and the floor of the nave and chancel is covered with varicolored tiles. Though most of the tiles bear no design, three in the chancel are pictorial: One shows the device of a lion, another that of a falcon, while the third lying between the other two shows the device of a sword with a scroll bearing the word "HONOR." The sarcophagus of Lord Bohort is hidden in a cavity under the tiles here (see the "The Wizard's Message" section).

The characters might also notice that the gates to the cemetery on the north of the Lady Church have been forced open. Within, the graves show signs of disturbance. The soil in each plot has been turned over, almost as if a gardener had been at work. Indeed some picks and shovels lie scattered about among the weeds that grow between the plots.

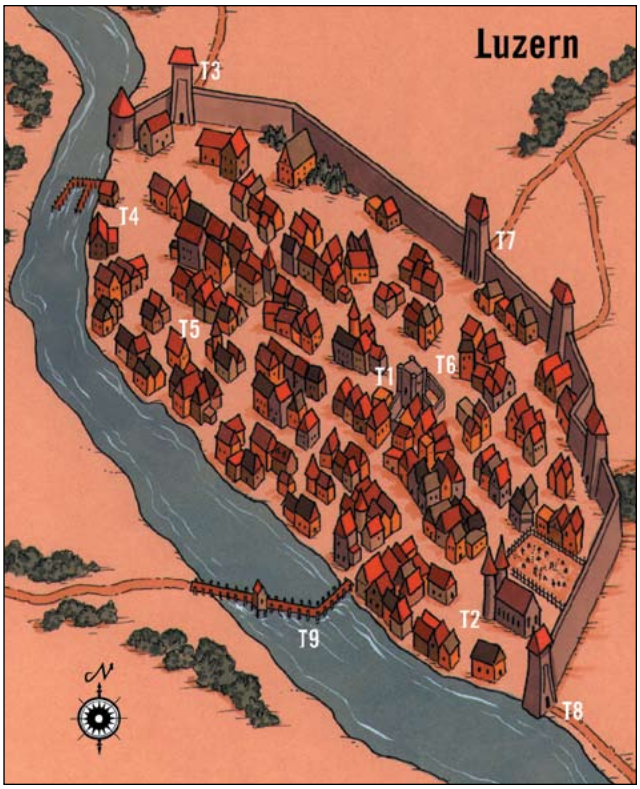
T3. Whitegate. This gatehouse is uninhabited and remains open by day. At sunset, a skeletal guardsman from the Stonegate comes and locks the gate, and it remains locked until morning.

T4. Mill. During the day, a lone skeleton periodically arrives at this building pulling a cart loaded with crops harvested from a nearby field. Two others thresh and grind the rye. The mill closes at night; the three skeletons return to their homes in two of the houses at the other end of the square south of the mill.

T5. Wine Market. Although the trading of wines and ales no longer takes place, this large square remains remarkable for a statue that stands here. In the center of the square is the stone figure of a lion with a hind riding upon his back. As a plaque at its base recounts, the statue is in remembrance of a former baron of Luzern, Renhard the Lion. The hind represents the water nymph that he rescued who then granted him the right to build the first bridge over the river. The only shop open on the Wine Market is the inn and tavern that takes its name from the hero of this tale (area T5).

T5. Lion of the Valley. At the inn, the few patrons (all skeletal) are silent. The barkeep is a skeleton man and does not speak.

The characters can take rooms at the inn if they wish; the skeletal barkeep happily fetches them keys. If so, they are his only guests. The barkeep knows how to draw ale from the taps, but no food can be found at the inn. If food is requested, the barkeep prepares a platter of bones. The livestock in the valley were slaughtered or turned into skeletons during the past winter; since then the townsfolk made do with foodstuffs saved from past years such as hard grains, old cheeses, nuts, and jams.



Development: If the PCs pass the Poortis residence near The Lion of the Valley, Yuvihiun (female human Com2) calls out to them through a crack in their shuttered windows. She can't tell them much they don't know already from Thun, Chur, or Bregentz. (Use the text provided in "For the Players" to provide the PCs with any information they might not already

RESIDENTS OF LUZERN

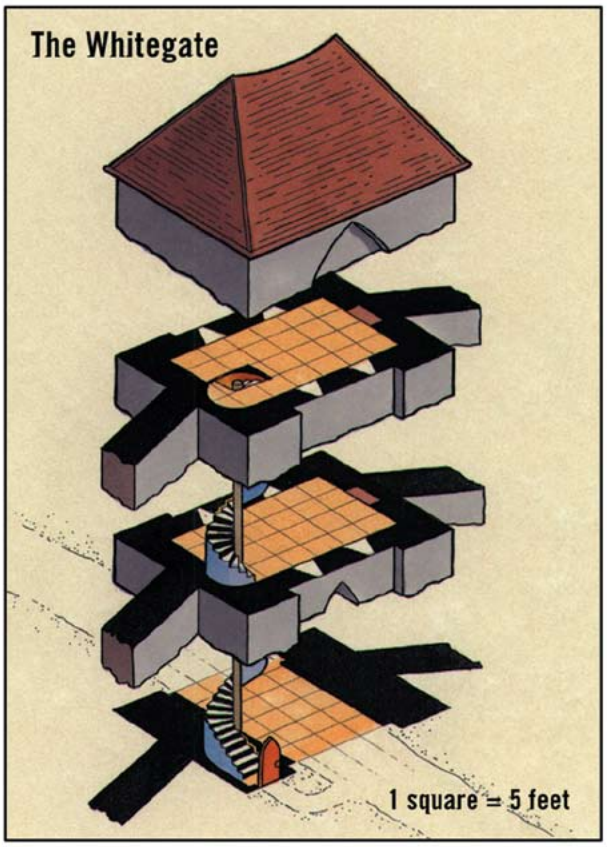
Totentanz Skeleton Men: CR 1/3; Medium-size Undead (5 ft. 2 in. to 6 ft. tall); HD 1d12; hp 8; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +1 melee (1d6+1, sickle), +1 melee (1d6+1, club), or +1 melee (1d4+1/crit 19-20, dagger); SQ undead, cold immunity, half damage from piercing and slashing weapons, Totentanz; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

SQ—Totentanz (Su): The entire town of Luzern, as well as the area up to one mile distant from the city walls, is under the influence of a desecrate spell cast at 10th level. This gives its undead residents a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. They also have +1 hit points per Hit Die, and turning checks in this area suffer a -3 profane penalty.

The curse is also responsible for the life imprint that drives the residents to attempt to mimic the living in their daily habits and routines.

Ad-hoc XP: Award 10% more experience for each skeleton; the desecrate effect makes them tougher than normal.



have.) She asks the PCs to escort herself and her daughters (female human Com1) to the edge of the valley. If the PCs agree, she herds the young girls out the door with bags in hand after a short wait. She tells them her husband Elner is still working his fields north of town, and he doesn't want to leave, but she's had enough of "this accursed place."

Yuvihiun doesn't know the fate of the town's baroness, the Lady Gudrun Talluth, but she believes the noble was imprisoned or slain by the undead in the town castle. The town priest, Friar Farold, disappeared early, and the Lady Church has been locked up since. Not even the wizard who dwells in a keep outside the town (and whose name is unknown to the townsfolk) has been heard of since the night the skeletons appeared.

T6. Falcon Square. In the morning, skeletons arrive and set up stalls, and more undead come to buy their wares. Although most of the goods offered for sale are damaged or shoddy, their customers don't seem to mind. All sorts of rags and broken or useless oddments silently change hands between customer and vendor. They finish their trading and bartering at midday, when two skeletal guardsmen come from the Stonegate to close the market. The skeletal traders immediately close upon the arrival of the guardsmen, even if in the middle of a sale.

These skeletal merchants do not respond to queries or purchase attempts from the living. If PCs approach or try to strike up a conversation, they are ignored.

T7. Highgate. The guardrooms of this gate remain empty at all times, as do those of the two unused gates known as Falcongate and Dragongate. Each has the same design as the Whitegate. The Highgate is opened each day by a skeletal guardsman from the Stonegate, and locked again at night. The guardrooms above hold only empty barrels.

T8. Stonegate. This three-story gatehouse is identical in layout to the Whitegate.

Creatures (EL 2): The Stonegate is inhabited by skeletal guardsmen. Unlike typical skeleton men, however, each of them wears armor and bears a longsword.

Skeletal Guardsmen (5): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20).

Five skeletons can be found at any one time congregating on the second floor, except at midday when two of their number head to Falcon Square to close the market, or at dawn or dusk when one of them leaves to lock the gates at all five gatehouses. The skeleton who closes the gates also carries a large iron key ring upon which hang two large keys. One fits the locks on all of the city gates, while the other opens the locks on the chains barring the door of the Lady Church. The uppermost floor of the Stonegate is bare and uninhabited.

T9. Chapel Bridge. Two-thirds of the way along this roofed bridge is a small chapel. Hidden in a secret niche behind the altar is a tome bearing the title *The Book of the Dancing Death*. It was hidden here by the wizard Tollerath. See the section entitled "The Wizard's Message" for details on the tome's contents. Finding the book requires a successful Search check (DC 20). PCs who have deciphered the riddle in the "The Wizard's Message" gain a +10 circumstance bonus to this check.

THE TOWN

♛ **Luzern (small town)**: Monstrous; AL LG/CE; 50-gp limit (usually 3,000); Assets 20,000; Population 1,500 (usually 2,500); Mixed (Human 35%, Undead 65%).

Authority Figures: Lady Gudrun Talluth, Baroness of Luzern, female human Pal2; the Wraith King, male wraith Nec10.

Important Characters: Friar Farold, male human Clr6 (missing), assorted undead.

Others: Town watch (missing), skeletal guardsmen.

Notes: The town is under the sway of the Totentanz Gate.

The Totentanz

If the characters stay a night in the town, they witness the parade of the dead. Each night, a troop of skeletons emerge from the castle and tear down the streets in a wild procession. They bear musical instruments: horns, cymbals, pipes, and drums. The skeletons play as best they can—clashing, shrieking, and banging while clacking their teeth and stomping their feet.

These nocturnal rituals are not without rhyme or reason. When the town still had human residents, the skeleton men would break into the houses of the townsfolk and capture those sheltered within. They then returned with them to the town castle, where they forced the townsfolk into the *Totentanz Gate*. If the characters attack the dancing skeletons, they risk being captured by the undead (who attack to subdue the characters) and hauled to the castle to be made skeletons themselves.

See the description of the *Totentanz Gate* for a complete description of the dance's effects.

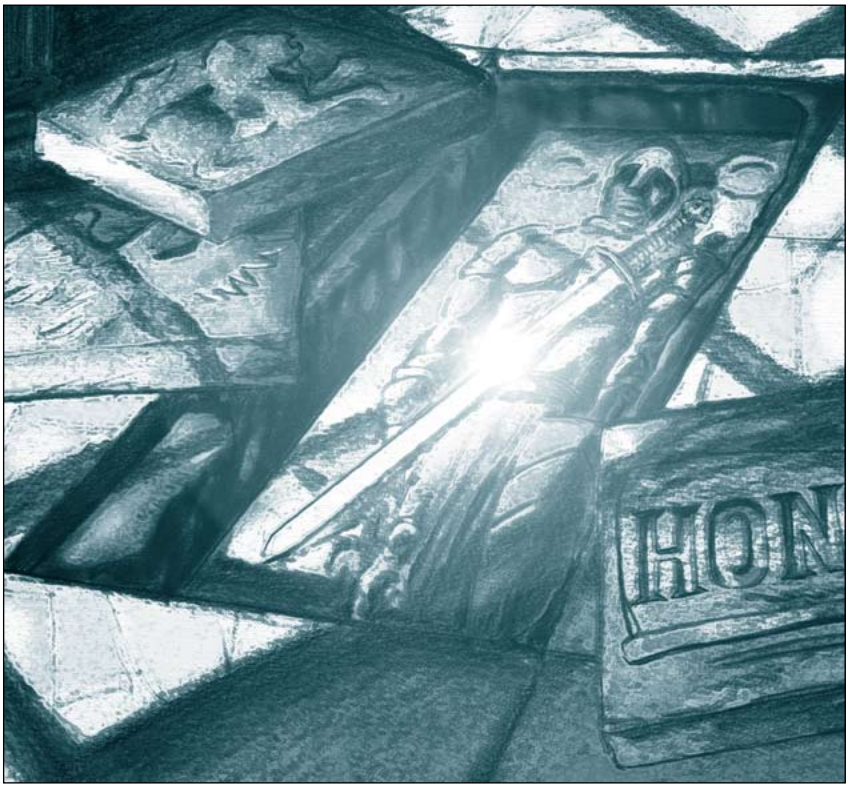
Wizard's Keep

Beyond the fields that lie across the Chapel Bridge is a white limestone keep. The keep is rectangular with four round, corner towers and a gatehouse. Each tower is topped with a peaked roof, and similar structures are built over the body of the keep and the gatehouse. The trail to the keep leads to the base of the mound upon which the structure sits.

The keep was formerly the home of the wizard Tollerath, who died trying to rescue the baroness from her castle. As such, a number of magical effects will be encountered in the castle. Unless specified otherwise, doors in the keep have the following statistics:

Wooden Doors: 4 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 40; Break (DC 23); Open Lock (DC 25).

The front doors are made of heavy oak, unlocked, and closed. The glass that once filled the windows of the castle has all been broken, but shutters remain. They are all closed and latched (Break DC 20, Open Lock DC 20).



First Floor

K1. Entrance Hall.

This magnificent hall probably served as a reception room. It is occupied by five skeletal guards wearing the livery of Luzern; as you enter, they draw longswords and move to intercept you. To the west you can see a staircase leading up.

Creatures (EL 2): The skeletons attack any who seek to enter the keep. The entrance hall is otherwise empty.

Skeletal Guardsmen (6): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20).

K2. Great Stair.

The great stair is bare save for fallen statuary and a pair of 15-foot-long chains. It looks like the chains were used to pull down a statue that once stood at the landing.

To the north and south are short, wide hallways. At the top of the staircase, you can see the stairs end at a T-intersection.

A cursory examination of the statue reveals that it once depicted a 10-foot-tall man with the head of a hawk bearing a rod and a staff. It's not clear what the vandals were looking for, or even if they found anything behind the statuary.

K3. North Hall.

Much of this hall is filled with cobwebs. A door in the northwest corner of the room is made of iron and looks quite sturdy. Another door in the northeast corner presumably leads to one of the keep's towers.

The iron door in the northwest is protected by an arcane lock (Break DC 38). It can be opened, however, if the correct key is found (in area K17). If the PCs manage to open the door, they find a stairway leading to the dungeon.

K4. Guest Room.

This room was probably a guest room at some time. A decayed bed and a chest stand against one wall, but the room is otherwise shrouded in dust and cobwebs.

Creatures (EL 3): Six monstrous spiders have taken over this room. They attack as soon as the PCs enter the room.

Small Monstrous Spiders (6): hp 4 each; Monster Manual 210.

Treasure: The chest contains a longsword and 210 gp.

K5. South Hall. The ceiling of this hall is obscured by cobwebs. The hall is otherwise unremarkable.

K6. Armory.

Once an armory, this chamber has been looted. Now, only the weapon racks, covered in dust and cobwebs, remain.

Searching among the debris in the room reveals an old helm and some broken crossbow bolts.

K7. Kitchen.

Formerly the kitchen, this room contains the corpses of two giant rats. They lie among litter on the floor that includes a fallen ledge, broken crockery, and shattered glass. Rusty

knives hang on hooks along the south wall. A large cauldron sits in the fireplace in the west wall, which sheds an eerie glow on the room due to the green flames that flicker within.

Creature (EL 6): Hiding behind some barrels at the west end of the room is Taurian, a werewolf. This townsman was a friend of the wizard Tollerath, who once inhabited this keep. Tollerath long sought the cure for Taurian's lycanthropy, but was unsuccessful. Taurian's wolf personality has overcome his better nature now, and he attacks without provocation.

Taurian, Male Werewolf War3: CR 6; Medium-size Shapechanger (6 ft tall); AL CE; three alternate forms.

Human form: HD 3d8; hp 15; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 11, flat-footed 12); Atk +3 melee (1d3 subdual, unarmed strike); SA wolf empathy; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skill: Craft (bowmaking) +8, Jump +6, Listen +6, Search +4, Spot +9. Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Skill Focus (bowmaking).

Hybrid Form: HD 3d8+6; hp 21; Init +7; Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Atk +6 melee (1d6+1, bite); SA trip, curse of lycanthropy, wolf empathy; SQ scent, damage reduction 15/silver; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (bowmaking) +8, Hide +4, Jump +7, Listen +10, Move Silently +5, Search +8, Spot +13, Wilderness Lore +0*. Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (bowmaking), Weapon Finesse (bite).

*Wolves receive a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Wolf Form: As hybrid form, except Taurian cannot use his Craft skill while in wolf form.

SA—Wolf Empathy (Ex): Can communicate and empathize with wolves or dire wolves, granting a +4 racial bonus to checks when influencing a wolf's attitude and allowing the communication of simple concepts and commands.

SA—Curse of Lycanthropy (Su): Any humanoid hit by the werewolf's bite attack in animal form must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract lycanthropy

SA—Trip (Ex): A werewolf that hits with a bite can attempt to trip as a free action (see page 130 in the Player's Handbook) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the werewolf.

SQ—Alternate Form (Su): Can assume a bipedal hybrid form or the form of a wolf as though using a polymorph self spell as a standard action; upon assuming either form, he regains hit points as if having rested for a day.

SQ—Damage Reduction (Ex): A lycanthrope in animal or hybrid form gains damage reduction 15/silver.

Tactics: Taurian waits until the PCs begin searching the room before leaping from his hiding place and attacking. He attacks unarmored or lightly armored characters first, and Taurian continues attacking one opponent until that person goes down before attacking a new target. He fights until he is slain.

K8. Bakery. A dead giant rat lies on the floor here. Sitting on the shelves on the walls of this former bakehouse are some moldy loaves of bread and wheels of cheese.

K9. Dining Room.

The grand table of this dining room is smashed, and the chairs and plates have been broken, their remains hurled into the southwest corner. Of the wall decorations, only an old stuffed stag's head remains.

The dead have no need to eat, so this room has remained unused and unoccupied.

K10. Werewolf Den.

Some creature has made itself at home here. A pile of blankets and straw lies against one wall, and some scattered bones litter the floor.

Taurian the werewolf has claimed this room as his own.

Treasure: A successful Search check (DC 15) reveals Taurian's short sword among the tattered bedding. A gem in its pommel is worth 650 gp, but the sword is otherwise normal.

Second Floor

K11. Portrait Room.

A bas-relief portrait of a woman fills the alcove in the north wall of this room. She is depicted carrying a book in her left hand; her right hand is held in a sign of benediction. The likeness has been defaced with charcoal. A stained glass window to the east has been shattered, and shards of ceramic and glass litter the floor nearby. An ashlar has also been removed from the south wall, revealing a hidden cupboard.

Treasure: Tucked in a crack within the cupboard is a ragged scroll. It bears a knock spell (cast at 12th level).

K12. Guard Room. A rack holding three longspears stands here.

K13. Winch Room.

A large winch against the east wall of this bare room appears to operate the portcullis below. Four skeletal guardsmen dressed in chainmail and bearing longswords rush to attack.

Creatures (EL 1): The four skeletal guardsmen guard the winch that operates the portcullis to the gate below.

Skeletal Guardsmen (4): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20).

K14. Toppled Statuary.

This unremarkable room has been searched thoroughly.

Four broken, man-sized statues lie fallen about this room, as do the shattered remains of a half-dozen swords. The door to the southeast has been torn from its hinges.

K15. Burnt Dead.

The stench of burnt flesh pervades this area. The blackened remains of a man and three broken chests litter the floor.

Treasure: Searching the grisly remains reveals 37 sp, 23 cp, and a wooden figurine of an owl with empty sockets where it once had eyes. A silver necklace has also become caught in the split timber of one of the chests. It is worth 125 gp.

K16. Doppelganger Suite.

A couch in this room has had its legs broken, its fabric raked with knives, and its stuffing exposed. Upon it lies a broken birchwood wand. An overturned table with only three legs stands nearby, and the figure of a small ceramic lion also lies in pieces among broken crockery on the floor.

The door to area K18 is locked.

Creature (EL 3): A successful Spot check (opposed by the doppelganger's Hide check) reveals a figure hiding behind the couch. He wears a brown tunic, worn boots, and a black hood.

Doppelganger (1): hp 22; Monster Manual 60.

Tactics: The creature calls himself Willem, but he is not what he seems. He tells the party he is a woodsman who sought shelter in the castle only to discover the dead within. If he suspects the PCs do not believe his story, he immediately takes the form of one of the PCs and attacks that character.

Development: The truth is that Willem is nothing more than a looter. He thought the keep was abandoned and hoped to find some untended valuables. Willem hopes to gain the protection of the characters. If the PCs accept his story, he simply follows them until he can leave the keep.

Treasure: If slain, the creature assumes its true form, and a small pouch with four 100-gp gems can be found on its body.

K17. Study.

Hidden in the surviving spine of one of the books is a brass

The floor of this tower room is littered with loose pages fallen from books whose spines have been torn or broken. The pages bear lists of rents and fees and other mundane writings.

key. Finding it requires a Search check (DC 18). It opens the door in area K3 that leads to the dungeon.

K18. Stairway Up. The door to the southwest is sealed by an arcane lock spell (12th-level). If the PCs manage to make their way into the room, read or paraphrase the following:

A broken lantern on the floor is the only furnishing in this room. The chamber is lit by a flaming stone orb affixed to the ceiling. A staircase seems to lead up, but it disappears in from view in the thick and dusty cobwebs that obscure the ceiling.

The stairway leading up is cleverly blocked by the sticky effect of a permanent web spell (cast at 12th level). The stone orb on the ceiling is under the effect of a continual flame spell (12th level). Detaching it requires a way up to the ceiling of the 10-foot-high room and a successful Strength check (DC 20).

Third Floor

K19. Great Hall.

The great hall of the keep is a scene of devastation. Something has clearly taken the time to loot this chamber thoroughly. The tapestries are shredded, the furnishings destroyed, and the windows shattered. The remains of lanterns and other ironware can be seen among the debris, as can the skeletal remains of a large dog.

The door to area K23 is locked.

K20. Guard Room.

This empty room allows one to keep watch on the northwest approach to the keep. It is empty and bare save for some timber from smashed furniture.

Right outside the door to area K19, a secret locked stone door hides the entrance to stairs that lead to the attic above. A successful Search check (DC 18) reveals the door's presence.

Secret Stone Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 60; Break (DC 25); Open Lock (DC 25).

K21. Storage. This hall contains some smashed barrels which, judging by their smell, once held ale and wine.

K22. Guard Room.

A pile of shredded rugs litter the floor of this chamber. Once you enter the room, however, the rugs stir, and several multilegged vermin scurry out to attack.

Creatures (EL 2): Seven monstrous centipedes have made a nest within the torn remains of the rugs.

Small Monstrous Centipedes (7): hp 4 each, Monster Manual 207.

K23. Bedchamber.

The floor of this chamber is covered with a red carpet. About the room are a canopied bed, a chair, and an armoire.

The posts of the bed are pitted and scratched, and its linen has been torn and thrown to the floor. Two urns have been smashed open, and a painting can be seen, torn down from the wall. The portrait, though slashed, still bears a recognizable figure: It shows a bearded man of middling years wearing a purple, brimless, naped cap of heavy silk and a heavy woolen robe with a high neckline and long dagged sleeves.

Creature (EL 3): Lurking near the bed is a shadow—one of the undead that accompanied the Wraith King to Luzern.

Shadow (1): hp 19; Monster Manual 161.

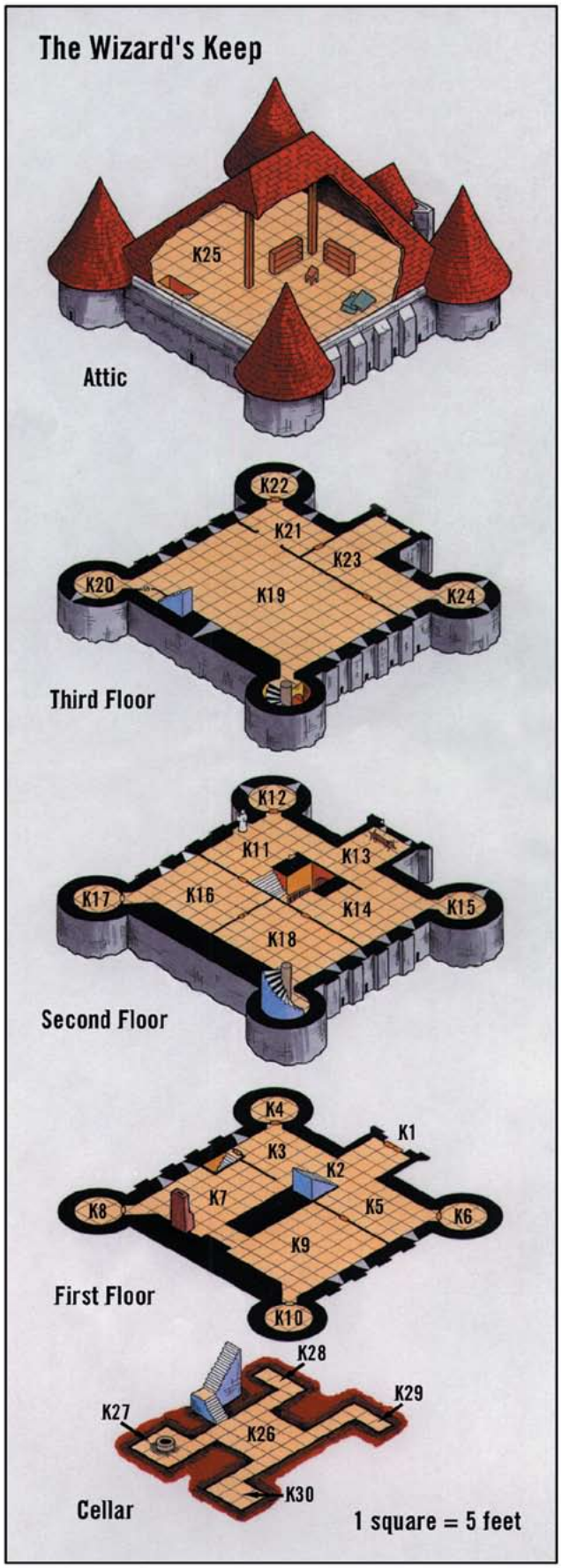
SQ—Totentanz (Su): The shadow is under the influence of a desecrate spell cast at 10th level. This gives it a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Turning checks in this area suffer a -3 profane penalty.

Ad-hoc XP: Award 10% more experience for the shadow; the desecrate effect makes it tougher than normal.

Tactics: The shadow attacks the PC closest to it and fights until turned or destroyed.

K24. Laboratory.

The tower contains a large open and empty iron chest. The wall to the south is pierced with mounts for brackets, but the



brackets and shelves that once sat upon them have fallen to the floor. Lying about the shelves are broken pots and glassware, powders, spilt unguents, and withered herbs. The wall to the left of the shelves is blank, bare even of dust.

The material from the containers that once stood on the shelves were spell components that are no longer salvageable.

The bare wall next to the shelves bears a series of lightly carved marks that were inscribed so as to follow the natural lines and grain of the stone. Detect magic or a similar spell reveals them to the characters. Also, a successful Search check (DC 20) on the wall reveals the faint tracery of the shallow carvings. A successful Intelligence check (DC 10) then reveals that the rough etchings actually form words. Once the symbols are discovered, they can then be interpreted by a read magic spell, a Spellcraft check (DC 21), or a Decipher Script check (DC 20). The runes say, "Look to the lady for succor—Tollerath."

Attic

K25. Workroom.

Beyond the strands of webbing is the largest chamber you've seen. This unlit attic chamber was probably Tollerath's workroom. A collection of books sits on shelves, and there is a desk upon which rest a lantern, a stylus, parchment, and ink jar. A collection of rugs and cushions form a makeshift bed.

Treasure: Few of the books bear titles, but they include works on topics such as astronomy, divination, and architecture. One book, titled Curse of the Wolf, contains opinions on cures for lycanthropy. Another is entitled Arcana and describes the functions of rare magic items: the mattock of the titans, mirror of life trapping, and the apparatus of Kwalish. Wedged between two untitled volumes is a scroll that contains three spells scribed by a 12th-level wizard: stinking cloud, dispel magic, and remove curse.

Development: The parchment on the table bears a series of mathematical calculations. A Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) reveals that they are astronomically determined measurements from which the wizard Tollerath hoped he could divine how to rid the valley of the undead. Some words are also scribbled in Common at the end: "the castle," "the undead," and a woman's name: Gudrun.

Cellar

K26. Fog Room.

At the foot of the stairs is a room filled with eerily still mist that limits your view to a 5-foot distance. You see vaguely humanoid shapes lying on the floor the chamber.

The mists were created by a permanent fog cloud spell. About the room lie three inanimate human skeletons, the remains of former servitors of the Wraith King that were destroyed after setting off the Trap.

Trap (EL 4): The trap consists of an electrified floor that covers the entire area from the door to the four hallways leading from the room. The mist obscures it just enough to prevent intruders from seeing the arcane glyphs carved into its surface and becoming suspicious when they first enter the room. Once it is discharged, the trap remains inactive for 4 rounds before resetting.

Electrified Floor Trap: CR 4; section of floor (3d10); Reflex save (DC 14) for half damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25).

K27. Well. This chamber contains the castle well.

Creature (El 4): An ooze that lairs within the well lashes out at anyone who approaches it.

Gray Ooze (1): hp 26; Monster Manual 145.

Treasure: The room holds only a broken and pitted short sword. Down the well, however, a bucket on a chain holds a small stone coffer that holds 130 gp, two 500-gp gems, and a +2 dagger.

K28. Stolen Goods.

Two charred, inanimate human skeletons lie on the floor at this end of the passage. A layer of soot covers the floor and walls of most of the last 5 feet of the passage. A ledge at the end of the passage is similarly blackened with soot, save for a small untouched circular area in the middle.

The item that stood on the ledge was stolen by the undead.

K29. Shrine.

A figurine of a woman holding a book lies shattered on the ground here amid broken candles. A ledge above the statue bears wax imprints where it and the candles once stood.

K30. The Message.

A small ledge at the rear of this otherwise empty room holds a rotting pile of hay, under which you can see a glint of metal.

The metal is a scroll tube missed by the undead raiders. Inside is a scroll that bears the message elucidated in the next section.

The Wizard's Message

Being a wizard and a cautious man, Tollerath felt compelled to leave his message in the form of a riddle. The scroll found in area K30 reads:

To find the arm he had us hide
You must go to the hall of the lady blessed.
There, under that which never lied
He found a place of rest.

By the place where the fair nymph pointed
A place of honor was decreed.
There behind the stone anointed
You will find the work you need.

Only then one worthy shall
Cast away the spirits foul.
The storm will wash away the lie;
May you have better luck than I.

The riddle reveals three things: the location of the sword of Lord Bohort (area T2), the location of The Book of Dancing Death (area T9), and that the sword of Lord Bohort can be quite effective in combating the Wraith King. The skeleton men have been searching for it since they first arrived in the valley. The blade is hidden in the Lady Church in the chancel, under the tile decorated with the sword and scroll. There lies the sarcophagus of Lord Bohort, the late baron of Luzern. It takes several minutes to lift the tiles and reveal his final resting place. Atop his sarcophagus lies the sword.

The "place where the fair nymph pointed" references the legend of Chapel Bridge and its construction. In a niche hidden behind the altar in the chapel, a tome can be found entitled The Book of the Dancing Death. This book details the Totentanz Gate, how it operates, and its effects once it has been activated and put to use. It also specifically mentions that the gate is utterly evil and perverts the natural cycle of life and death.

The final stanza refers to the Baroness Gudrun Talluth, who is imprisoned in the town castle. After a brief investigation, Tollerath, familiar with the region's history, determined who the Wraith King was in life and what his goals must be. He reasoned (incorrectly) that if the baroness managed to regain her family's ancestral blade, she could call upon its legendary power to defeat the Wraith King and destroy the Totentanz Gate. The truth is far more mundane. The Wraith King must be defeated to destroy the Totentanz Gate, but the sword only gives the PCs an added advantage in the combat if Lady Gudrun Talluth is present and wielding it (see "The Wraith King" for details). The party must, therefore, gain access to the castle. The castle gate is open only during the nightly parade of the skeleton men.

Lord Bohort's blade is a +2 longsword that grants its wielder the Extra Turning feat. In the hands of a paladin, it also emits a magical light in a 10-foot-radius that has the power to protect against undead. This power functions exactly like a protection from evil spell cast at 10th level, except it works against undead only (instead of evil creatures).

The Castle of the Baroness

Each night after the sun sets, the skeletons set out on their parade about the streets of the town. During the procession, the gate to the town castle (area T1) remains open.

If the castle is attacked during the day, a total of forty-five skeletons defend it. These guardians equip themselves with crossbows and man the arrow slits and windows throughout the castle (one at each). The remaining thirty skeletons take up positions in areas C1, C3, C4, C5, C8, and C9, armed with light crossbows and longswords, in squads of five. The other inhabitants of the castle (the wights and shadows) stay where the Wraith King has placed them. The portcullis to the front gate can be raised only by the winch in area C5, and the rear door to the castle (to area C4) is locked.

At night, most skeletons are absent, as many of them join the dance through the streets.

First Floor

C1. Anteroom.

The walls of this entrance chamber are decorated with two black shields bearing a silver skull over two crossed swords. You can see a corridor to the east, a staircase to the west, and a large room to the south.

Creatures (EL 1): The anteroom is guarded by three skeletal guardsmen during the day, but at night it is empty.

Skeletal Guardsmen (3): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20).

C2. Foyer. Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs arrive here at night:

> This foyer has been stripped of its furnishings, leaving only bare walls and a pair of stools. Standing in a silent parody of a normal court are a half-dozen skeletons wearing the trappings of nobility. As you watch, one of the undead fops seems to make a joke, as evidenced by the silent laughter of its companions. Each skeleton also wears a longsword, and as they turn toward you, they draw their weapons and advance.

Creatures (EL 1): Each of these skeletons wears a fine hat and a colorful tunic over its armor.

Skeletal Courtiers (3): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20).

C3. Treasure Chamber. In this room, the Wraith King has collected all the wealth looted from the town, the baroness's castle, and the wizard's keep.

> This large chamber is piled high with goods: tapestries, gilded furniture, sacks of money, and ornamental knick-knacks. Stamped on all the sacks is the seal of Luzern, indicating that these and the rest of the items in the room belong to the Lady Gudrun Talluth and her barony.

Treasure: Piled here is the following treasure: 3,400 gp, 2,700 sp, 1,200 cp, 78 gems (50 × 5 gp, 18 × 10 gp, 5 × 50 gp, 3 × 100 gp, 1 × 500 gp, 1 × 1,000 gp), a gold goblet (500 gp), an ivory drinking horn (750 gp), a silver and ruby ring (900 gp), a gold filigree brooch (1,300 gp), and a silver and lapis chalice (2,000 gp). The chalice was stolen from the Lady Church.

C4. Kitchen. Once the castle's kitchen, this room has been unused since the Wraith King seized power. The iron-bound postern gate in the south wall is bolted shut from the inside.

Creatures (EL 1): During the day, three skeletal guardsmen watch this area.

Skeletal Guardsmen (3): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20).

Second Floor

C5. Barracks.

Creatures (EL 4 or 7): By night, a six skeletal guardsmen

> This room has been converted into a barracks, as evidenced by the scattered cots and filthy rags that litter the floor. It looks like this room might once have actually been several smaller chambers, but nearly all the doors have been torn from their hinges, and in places entire walls have been removed.

man the machicolations that protect the main gate. This number grows to twenty during the day. The skeletons here during the day are only marginally interested in their duty. As a result, only 1d6 join the battle each round while the rest lounge about.

Skeletal Guardsmen (12 or 36): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20) and light crossbows (1d8/crit 19-20).

C6. Armory. One of the only rooms left mostly untouched, the armory holds 24 light crossbows, 300 bolts, and 12 spears.

C7. Prison Chamber. The door to this chamber is made of sturdy iron-bound wood. It is locked.

> The room is poorly furnished with a stool, as well as straw and rags for a bed. Hanging from a wooden hook on the wall is an ancient, moth-eaten wedding gown, apparently meant for the woman coolly regarding you from the far side of the room. Dressed in a simple white robe that has seen better days, she addresses you:
>
> "So, has the vile creature that would claim my hand now gained the services of the living, as well?"

Locked Wooden Door: 4 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 40; Break (DC 23); Open Lock (DC 25).

If the PCs open the door, read or paraphrase the following: This chamber serves as the prison of the baroness. She is eager to help the PCs fight and is grateful for their aid. A pious and compassionate woman, she wants her barony returned to normal.

Lady Gudrun Talluth, Baroness of Luzern, Female Human Pal3: CR –; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 3d10+3; hp 28; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10); Atk +4 melee (1d3+1 subdual, unarmed strike); SA smite evil, turn undead; SQ detect evil, divine grace, lay on hands, divine health, aura of courage, remove disease; AL LG; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Heal +8, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Knowledge (religion) +5, Ride +8. Feats: Blind-Fight, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Development: If Gudrun sees anything that the PCs have taken from area C3, she thanks them for retrieving the wealth of her barony and politely asks for the item back.

If she sees the PCs carrying the sword of Lord Bohort, she becomes visibly excited and asks where the weapon came from. She then thanks the characters once more before asking for it. If the PCs don't return the baroness's property to her (any of it), she becomes noticeably distant, demanding that they either return the barony's belongings or she will have them arrested. She tells them that they will be rewarded if they obey the law, but that looters in Luzern are treated harshly. The fact that she is alone and unarmed is no deterrent.

Third Floor

C8. Last Stand.

> Once the hall where the castle residents would gather to make their last stand in case of a siege, this room is now barren save for its two new occupants: two creatures with rotting, mottled flesh and sharp fangs moving quickly your way.

Creatures (EL 2): Two ghouls inhabit this chamber.

Ghouls (2): hp 13 each; Monster Manual 97.

SQ—Totentanz (Su): The ghouls are under the influence of a desecrate spell cast at 10th level. This gives them a +1

profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Turning checks in this area suffer a -3 profane penalty.

Ad-hoc XP: Award 10% more experience for the ghouls, since the desecrate effect makes them tougher than normal.

C9. Former Bedchambers. Once well-furnished for guests of the barony, these chambers have fallen into disrepair.

A bed, two tables, and four chairs have been turned on their sides and destroyed. Tapestries, ceramics, or glassware once found here have long since been smashed. Again, this room was apparently once several chambers. Rubble from walls and the kindling from doors litters the floor.

Creatures (EL 4 or 2): By day, another dozen skeleton men can be found in this room. Here they play with the furnishings of the humans. At night, the number drops to six.

Skeletal Guardsmen (12 or 6): These skeletons are identical to those provided in the "Residents of Luzern" sidebar except they wear chainmail (AC 18) and wield longswords (1d8+1/crit 19-20) and light crossbows (1d8/crit 19-20).

Catacombs

C10. Wraith King's Lair.

The stairway from above leads to a cavern dimly lit by torch sconces set every 20 feet along the walls. The rock is unworked with the exception of the floor, which has been smoothed by the passage of countless feet over the years.

Creatures (EL 6): Two wights that accompanied the Wraith King to Luzern serve as his guards. When Tollerath made his rescue attempt, he was surprised by the wights and slain before he could loose a spell. He has now risen to join their ranks.

Wights (3): hp 26; Monster Manual 183.

SQ—Totentanz (Su): The wights are under the influence of a desecrate spell cast at 10th level. This gives them a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Turning checks in this area suffer a -3 profane penalty.

Ad-hoc XP: Award 10% more experience for each wight, since the desecrate effect makes them tougher than normal.

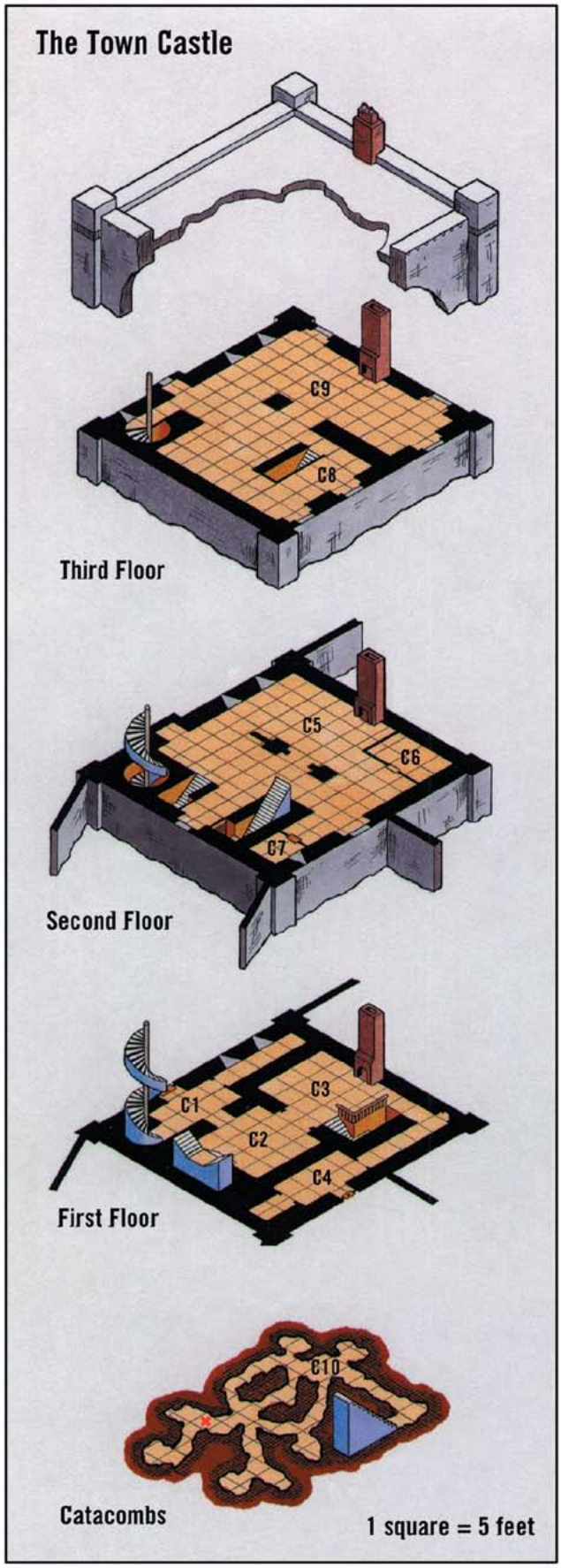
Tactics: The wights wait in the small dead-ends of the catacombs (see the map), hiding from view until the characters reach the intersection of the passages before attacking.

Development: The Wraith King lurks on the edges of the fight, casting spells on himself to improve his prowess in combat. See the Tactics section under his entry for details.

The Wraith King

Long ago, Lord Bohort was a questing knight who won glory serving righteousness in the lands beyond the forest. This glory led to confidence, and the confidence to arrogance. He eventually returned home to Luzern upon his father's death, intending to take up the mantle he so deserved. The fame he had garnered during his travels served him well, and many were those who sought the young baron's favor.

Once such individual was the bastard son—whose name is long forgotten—of a local minor noble, a naive and proud young man who felt that the life of a peasant was beneath him. Seeking to have his claim to the nobility legitimized, he approached his father and announced himself. He was met with



NEW ARTIFACT: TOTENTANZ GATE

A powerful device of evil constructed hundreds of years ago by members of a death cult loosely tied to Nerull, this hideous device (a minor artifact) is a perversion of the natural world.

Standing 7 feet high and 3 feet wide, the gate roughly resembles a normal doorway. However, this doorframe—there isn't actually a door or gate—is constructed entirely of the bones of humanoids, animals, and other creatures foreign to the Prime Material Plane. Once activated (with a command word), the air within the portal's frame shimmers as if covered with a thin layer of oil.

Once active, the gate can be used to create skeletons, although not the "normal" sort. Any creature who passes through the Totentanz Gate must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be instantly slain as the spell slay living. In addition, that creature's now-dead body is immediately stripped of its flesh and subject to an animate dead spell and reintroduced to the world as a skeleton. A creature who makes its save takes 3d6+20 points of damage but passes through the gate without further incident.

Any living creature that can fit through the doorframe can be affected; elementals, oozes, plants, and vermin are subject to the slay living effects but are immune to the animate dead effects.

Undead created with the Totentanz Gate are considered uncontrolled, but there is an additional effect to being brought to unlife in this fashion: Skeletons created by the gate retain an imprint of their former lives, which they are now compelled to resume as best they can.

The gate continuously radiates a desecrate effect in a one-mile radius, which is also the area of its life imprint effect. Skeletons created by the gate that leave the one-mile range are instantly destroyed. Undead who enter the area gain the benefits of the desecrate power, but do not gain the life imprint (only undead created by the gate behave in this fashion).

The Totentanz Gate is unnaturally heavy (it weighs 4,000 pounds). Its insane creators fashioned it this way since its purpose was to create kingdoms populated by undead, not to be used as weapon.

The gate has a hardness of 8 and 90 hit points. It radiates a strong evil aura.

The final effect of the gate is the Totentanz itself. The Totentanz, or dance of the dead, is an eerie and potentially deadly nightly ritual. Each night while the gate is active, 5d10 skeletons created by the gate who reside within one mile of the device participate in a macabre celebration that includes wailing music (played by the skeletons on whatever instruments they can find), dancing, and a processional that proceeds through a random portion of the gate's effect (that is, the skeletons don't follow the same path each night, and neither do they cover the entire range with each Totentanz). The skeletons will enter buildings as they go, searching for living creatures to join their bizarre parade.

Any living creature within 30 feet of the procession who can see or hear the skeletons caper about must make a successful Will save (DC 15) or become captivated by the song and dance. (Those creature immune to the gate's animate dead effect are also immune to this charm.) This is a mind-affecting charm. If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected by the Totentanz for one day.

A captivated victim walks toward the dancing skeletons, taking the most direct route. If the path leads into a dangerous area, that creature gets a second saving throw. Captivated creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. The effect persists for as long as the dance continues. Creatures who are unaffected by the Totentanz can attempt to shake those affected out of their stupor, allowing the victim to make another save with a +4 circumstance bonus.

The Totentanz dance lasts for 3 hours. Toward the end of this time, the procession moves back toward the gate, new victims in tow. These unfortunates are then made to dance through the gate to (probably) become skeletons themselves.

If the skeletons are attacked, as many as seven others will attempt to grapple the attacker. While one starts the grapple, the others use the Aid Another action until the attacker is pinned. At this point, all the skeletons strike to deal subdual damage until the victim is unconscious, at which point they carry him or her off to the Totentanz Gate. A protection from evil spell provides proof against this magic. Alternatively, the affected person can be freed by any of the following spells: break enchantment (DC 26), dispel magic (DC 26), or hold person (granted the character fails to make a Will save).

laughter and scorn. Determined to force his father to acknowledge him, he went to Baron Bohort. Fully confident that the worldly wise lord would grant his plea, he was shocked and ultimately shattered by the baron's curt refusal before his entire court. Followed by the mocking sounds of the nobles' laughter, the young man fled Luzern.

The experience shattered more than his carefully crafted self image. Indeed, his sanity was nearly lost. In the depths of deep despair, he made a pact with dark forces to achieve some measure of revenge. He became a servant of these powers, a cleric of death and darkness. In the course of his studies, he learned of an artifact called the Totentanz Gate, which had the power to convert entire regions of the living into realms of the dead.

Unfortunately, his plans to recover the artifact never came to pass during his life. He died when his small home caught fire. His rage was stronger than death, though, and the priest rose as a wraith. Styling himself the Wraith King, the creature went about recruiting more undead as his servants. No longer fettered by the bands of time, he continued his research to find the resting place of the Totentanz Gate. Many years later, he found its location and made the journey to recover the artifact.

Now, having hauled its bulk across the land, the Wraith King has his revenge against the ancestors of the baron who spurned him so long ago. His only remaining task is to wed the current baroness to cement his claim to the nobility and perfect his vengeance.

Creature (EL 10): The Wraith King is a powerful foe. Feel free not to add him to the battle until the wights are slain. If the baroness is with the PCs and wielding the sword of Lord Bohort, the Wraith King is greatly intimidated. His deluded mind sees his ancient, hated foe in the baroness. As a result, he suffers a -4 morale penalty to attacks, save, skill checks, and ability checks.

The "Wraith King," Wraith Clr5: CR 10; Medium-size Undead (Incorporeal) (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 10d12; hp 60; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 15 (touch 15, flat-footed 12); Atk +9 melee (incorporeal touch (1d4+1 and 1d6 permanent Constitution drain); SA Constitution drain, create spawn, spells; SQ undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance, unnatural aura, daylight powerlessness, Totentanz; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +11; Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +8, Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +7 (+9 necromancy), Spot +12. Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Extra Turning, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus

ENCOUNTER LEVEL CHART

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (ELs) for all of the keyed encounters in "Totentanz."

Area	Encounter Description	EL
*	Wolves (6)	6
*	Tamino, Male Human Brd2	—
*	Sil Waltherus the Ogre	4
*	The Wild Man, Male Werewolf War5	8
*	Guntrum, Male Human War3	—
T2	Wights (2)	5
T8	Skeletal Guardsmen (5)	2
K1	Skeletal Guardsmen (6)	2
K4	Small Monstrous Spiders (6)	3
K7	Taurian, Male Werewolf War3	6
K13	Skeletal Guardsmen (4)	1
K16	Willem the Doppelganger	3
K22	Small Monstrous Centipedes (7)	2
K23	Shadow	3
K26	Electrified Floor Trap	4
K27	Gray Ooze	4
C1	Skeletal Guardsmen (3)	1
C2	Skeletal Courtiers (3)	1
C4	Skeletal Guardsmen (3)	1
C5	Skeletal Guardsmen (12 or 36)	4 or 7
C8	Ghouls (2)	2
C9	Skeletal Guardsmen (12 or 6)	4 or 2
C10	Wights (3)	6
C10	Wraith King	10

*Encounters that occur on the journey to Luzern.

(Necromancy).

Spells Prepared (5/5/4/3; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—detect magic, inflict minor wounds (×2), mending, read magic; 1st—bane, cause fear*†, doom, endure elements, entropic shield; 2nd—darkness, death knell*†, hold person, spiritual weapon; 3rd—animate dead†, magic circle against good, searing light.

*Domain Spell. Domains: Death (death touch once/day), Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level).

†Because of Spell Focus (Necromancy), the base DC for saves against these spells is 15 + spell level. Note that this also applies to any inflict wounds spells the Wraith King spontaneously casts.

SQ—Totentanz (Su): The Wraith King is under the influence of a desecrate spell cast at 10th level. This gives him a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Turning checks in this area suffer a -3 profane penalty.

(See page 185-186 in the Monster Manual for wraith special abilities.)

Ad-hoc XP: Award 10% more experience for the Wraith King; the desecrate effect makes him tougher than normal.

Tactics: The Wraith King doesn't immediately involve himself in the battle between the PCs and the wights, even if the baroness isn't with the characters. Instead, he watches from the shadows, observing the PCs and their tactics to gauge their strengths and weaknesses.

He also begins casting spells the round after the PCs engage in combat with the wights, in the following order: magic circle against good, entropic shield, bane, and endure elements. After these spells are cast, he casts spiritual weapon, targeting opposing clerics or paladins first, arcane spellcasters second, and rogues third. He doesn't cast spells at the baroness; in fact, he avoids coming anywhere near her.

Once the PCs (presumably) defeat the wights, the Wraith King joins the fray with a searing light spell. He makes no noise as he attacks, and if the baroness is present and wielding the sword of Lord Bohorn, he stays as far from her as possible.

When he closes to melee with the PCs (selecting his targets as above), he relies primarily on his Constitution drain power, holding any further spells in reserve to spontaneously cast inflict wounds spells to heal himself. If reduced to one-third his total hit points or less, he attempts to use any further inflict wounds spells on the baroness. The Wraith King fights to the death.

Development: If the PCs defeat the Wraith King, they find the Totentanz Gate. (See the map of the Catacombs; the location of the gate is marked with an X.) If the gate is destroyed, the remaining skeletons in Luzern are instantly destroyed. Any remaining undead who weren't created by the gate immediately feel the absence of the desecrate effect and flee the vicinity of Luzern.

Totentanz Gate: The gate has a hardness of 8 and 90 hit points.

Treasure: The Wraith King has collected many valuables from his travels. Unable to use the corporeal magic items, he has kept them near so his enemies cannot use them against him. Near the back of the cavern, the PCs find a wooden chest containing a +2 cloak of resistance, a figurine of wondrous power (serpentine owl), a +1 large steel shield, a +1 heavy mace, and an emerald (worth 1,000 gp)

Concluding the Adventure

Once the gate has been destroyed and the remaining undead have been destroyed or fled, life returns mostly to normal in Luzern. Lady Gudrun Talluth rewards the PCs for rescuing her barony, offering them each 1,000 gp and the rights to keep anything they took off the Wraith King. Any of the goods or coinage in area C3 of her castle, though, she reclaims as her property. The barony then begins the long process of rebuilding. The baroness needs messengers to lure those townsfolk who fled back to their homes (she is prepared to offer each family that returns 100 gp), and she needs a new cleric to replace Friar Farold, whose remains are nowhere to be found.

The sword of Lord Bohort remains strapped to the baroness's side. The Book of Dancing Death is put in a locked coffer and kept in the baroness's room.

In the years to come, a painter is commissioned to create a memorial to the heroes who freed the town from the curse of the dancing dead. A series of panels is made for the gables of the roof of the Chapel Bridge chronicling how the Wraith King and his undead minions came to the valley, and how the heroes and the baroness banished them from the world. Ω

This is Bernard's first appearance in Dungeon Magazine. His dancing and parading undead gave the Dungeon staff the willies, especially since this issue went to press just days after Halloween.

Critical Threats

by Dungeon Staff
artwork by Jason A. Engle

9th-level Werewolf Cleric of Malar: Medium-size Shapechanger (6 ft. 5 in. tall); AL CE; three alternate forms

Human Form: HD 9d8+36; hp 84; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., AC 18 (+1 Dex, +5 *mithral breastplate,* +2 natural); Atk +12/+7 melee (2d4+8, +2 scythe); SA wolf empathy; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +15, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +7, Search +4, Scry +9, Spellcraft +4, Spot +7. *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Control Shape, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Power Attack, Sunder.

Hybrid Form: HD 9d8+54; hp 102; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 50 ft., AC 22 (+3 Dex, +5 *mithral breastplate,* +4 natural); Atk +12/+7 melee (2d4+9, +2 scythe) or +8 melee (1d6+5, bite); SA curse of lycanthropy, trip, wolf empathy; SQ damage reduction 15/silver, scent; SV Fort +14, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +17, Diplomacy +8, Hide +3, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +11, Move Silently +5, Search +8, Scry +9, Spellcraft +4, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +3*. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Control Shape, Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scythe), Power Attack, Sunder, Weapon Finesse (bite).

*Wolves receive a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Wolf Form: As hybrid form, except AC 17 (+3 Dex, +4 natural), no scythe attack or spells, and Oblivion can't use his Diplomacy or Scry skills while in wolf form.

Possessions: Mithral breastplate, +2 scythe, potion of haste [×2], *potion of cure moderate wounds* [×2], *brooch of shielding* (63 points), *+2 cloak of Charisma.*

As a priest of Malar, Oblivion's domains are Strength and Moon (from the *Forgotten Realms* setting—use Destruction if the Moon domain doesn't appear in your campaign).

OBLIVION

Raised in Luskan, Oblivion (born Ravu Jhuristhen) showed his vicious streak early. Larger and stronger than other children his age, he was a clever bully who led his own gang of street children by the time he was nine. At twelve, his parents, who ran a candlemaking shop below their modest home, ordered him to give up these activities to help run the family business. Unwilling to relinquish the power he craved, Oblivion burnt the candle shop to the ground after looting it of portable valuables. Many organizations in Luskan recognized that his leadership potential would make him a worthy addition to their cause, but the cult of Malar offered him something none of the others could: lycanthropy.

Oblivion was fully aware of the power he stood to gain by joining the ranks of the church of Malar, and his acceptance was immediate. By age sixteen, he had slaughtered two of his fellow initiates; by twenty, the count had risen to six. It was at this time that Oblivion changed his name to his current moniker, saying that his abilities as a servant of Malar enabled him to bring the sweet oblivion of death to his prey.

Oblivion became a high-priest at twenty-six. He took to his job with abandon, quickly earning the respect of the normally unruly priests and acolytes who served beneath him through a strength of will and viciousness matched by few.

Appearance: In human form, Oblivion is an imposing figure. He shaves his head bald but wears a wild, coarse black beard on his square jaw (the same color as his wolf-form's fur). His piercing eyes are yellow, like those of a wolf, a trait that no longer changes with his transition from wolf to man. Strong even as a human, his shoulders are broad and his frame fit and lean. Oblivion has learned that his animal impulses repel most folk, so he has become adept at hiding them behind an unemotional mask. When battle fury is upon him, feelings of savage animalism take over, and his face is a rictus of savage glee.

The priest's mithral armor is etched with the symbol of his god, but Oblivion wears plain red robes over the armor outside the temple. He much prefers his wolf-man hybrid form to this one, however, and in the safety of his church, this is the form to which he reverts (although he remains armed and armored).

Tactics: Oblivion has many agents who feed him whatever information he requests. However, he doesn't rely on these individuals exclusively. He regularly prepares the *scrying* spell, using it to keep tabs on the enemies of Malar.

In battle, Oblivion prefers melee combat to all other forms. As a result, he almost exclusively prepares those spells in his repertoire that can make him a tougher opponent physically. His favorite spells include *greater magic weapon, endurance, righteous might,* and *divine favor.*

He targets those who openly espouse other faiths to his (such as clerics and paladins) to the exclusion of almost all others in a fight. His greatest joy is lopping off the head of a rival priest before tearing into their corpse with his fangs.

Development: Oblivion often goes into crowded marketplaces or town squares to expound upon the glories of the Blood God, demanding that Malar be given the tribute he is due.

The PCs might run into members of the congregation of Malar hunting homeless folk in the streets of whatever city they dwell in. These hunts will doubtless lead them to someone attempting to turn the sinful depredations of civilization back to the glorious violent wilderness that Malar so loves, someone who sheds the blood of faithful and innocent alike without regret—someone like Oblivion. Ω

Prey for Tyrinth

This One Has a Crush On You

by Tim Hitchcock

artwork by Jeremy Jarvis • cartography by Christopher West

"Prey for Tyrinth" is a short D&D scenario that can be added to any existing adventure. It is suitable for four 5th-level player characters (PCs) but could easily be scaled for PCs of 3rd-13th level. The module focuses on the specific combat strategies of a water naga—stealth, trickery, traps, and spellcasting. It would help to review the section in the Dungeon Master's Guide *on water dangers (page 85).*

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Synopsis

At some point during an earlier adventure, the PCs find an old journal. Most of its pages have been torn out, and a lot of the legible writing seems the work of a deranged madman, but one of the final entries alludes to a lost treasure hidden in a "well." The PCs decide to pursue this lead, based on information they gather from the journal (see the "Journal Entry" handout).

Adventure Background

An old journal, perhaps found in a lost chest or among more precious tomes in a slain wizard's library, claims that "the kingdom's greatest treasure" lies hidden in a cavern at the bottom of a well. Based on other scribblings in the journal, and with a successful Gather Information or Knowledge (local) check (DC 15), the PCs can easily locate the well. If they wish, they can descend the shaft and work their way through a small maze of tunnels formed and fed by an underground stream.

This mazelike network of passages and caves is the home of Tyrinth, an evil water naga. Tyrinth is 15 feet long and weighs about 300 pounds. She has glistening, emerald green scales and eyes that glow dullish yellow. Her red and orange spines rise when she is angry or perturbed. Tyrinth subsists on blind fish that inhabit the stream and the occasional traveler foolish or unfortunate enough to plumb her lair. She never makes herself known immediately but allows prey to stumble about for a spell. When confronted by more than one interloper, she tries to divide the force and attack the members one at a time. She does this with the help of illusory sounds and motions and by leaving choice pieces of treasure lying around.

PCs who explore the naga's domain and survive can leave with Tyrinth's hoard and a few new adventure hooks.

Tyrinth's Well

The network of caves inhabited by the water naga is referred to throughout the adventure as "Tyrinth's Well."

Water: The water in Tyrinth's Well is 3 feet deep unless noted otherwise. Medium-size PCs can wade through the tunnels quite easily, but cannot run or charge unless they have some means of moving through the water unimpeded (such as a *freedom of movement* spell). Small PCs can either swim (DC 10) or wade through the water, but they cannot run or charge and also suffer the game effects of being entangled (as described on page 84 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) unless they have some way to move through water unimpeded.

Walls: The walls of Tyrinth's Well are formed naturally out of eroded limestone. Unless otherwise noted, they rise up an average of 10 feet, tapering at the top.

The tunnel and cave walls are made of slippery, unworked stone with few handholds (DC 25 Climb check required). The 60-foot-deep wellshaft is unworked dry stone, with a few lichen-encrusted handholds (DC 10 Climb check required).

Debris: There are quite a few small piles of floating debris made up mostly of greyish-green lichen, leaves, sticks, dead rats, dead fish, grass, and straw. These are harmless but contribute to the water's opacity.

Illumination: There are no light sources in Tyrinth's Well, so PCs without darkvision need to provide their own lights.

Tyrinth the Naga (EL 7)

Tyrinth can be encountered anywhere in her home, but when the PCs first descend the wellshaft, she is resting in area **12**. Unless the PCs are using *silence* spells or otherwise taking great care to conceal the sound of their descent, assume they are taking 10 on their Move Silently checks and have the naga make an opposed Listen check.

If the naga does not hear the PCs entering area **1**, she can make a new Listen check each time one or more PCs enter a new keyed area, as indicated on the map of Tyrinth's Well (for instance, when a PC moves from area **1** to area **4**). In all likelihood, she will become aware of the PCs long before they are aware of her.

Tyrinth (Water Naga): hp 59; *Monster Manual* 138-139.

Spells Known (6/7/7/4 per day; save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, detect poison, daze, ghost sound, ray of frost, resistance, read magic;* 1st—*cold embrace* (variant of *shocking grasp), color spray, charm person, sleep, true strike;* 2nd—

minor image, Tasha's hideous laughter, web; 3rd—*gaseous form, stinking cloud*.

Tactics: Tyrinth uses different tactics depending on where she encounters the PCs and how many adversaries she faces. (See the various encounter area descriptions, below, for specific tactics in each location.)

In general, she likes to slither under the murky water, staying out of sight until she's prepared to strike. In melee, she likes to precede a poisonous bite attack with *true strike* and *cold embrace* spells. (Note that Tyrinth's *cold embrace* spell is identical to the *shocking grasp* spell save that the energy type is cold instead of electricity.) If dealt 5 or more points of damage in a single attack, the naga flees, using *gaseous form* if necessary (she tends to save one of her 3rd-level spell slots for this purpose).

Exploring Tyrinth's Well

The wellshaft leading to Tyrinth's lair is 50 feet deep and opens into a 10-foot-high cave (area 1), meaning that the well is actually 60 feet deep. PCs who toss a coin or similar item down the well can hear it hit water if they succeed at a Listen check. The DC depends on the size of the item dropped: Fine—DC 30; Diminutive—DC 25; Tiny—DC 20; Small—DC 15; Medium-size—DC 5; Large or bigger—automatic. PCs who hear the sound can gauge the approximate depth of the well with a successful Intelligence check (DC 10). Whether Tyrinth hears the noise also depends on the size of the item dropped down the shaft; add +5 to all of the above Listen check DCs. (Tyrinth, who has a +10 modifier to Listen checks, has no chance of hearing a Fine object dropped down the shaft.)

PCs who fall while attempting to climb down the wellshaft land at the point marked ✕ on the map and take 5d6 points of damage plus 1d6 points of subdual damage. (The 3 feet of water at the bottom of the shaft cushions only part of the fall.)

1. Bottom of the Well.

The well opens into a small cavern about 20 feet in diameter. There are two openings in the cave walls one north and the other south. The water here is 3 feet deep and flows south to north. There are small 6-inch long blind fish swimming about, and the bottom directly beneath the well is littered with copper, silver, and a few gold coins.

Treasure: Characters searching the bottom of the cavern find 340 cp, 80 sp, and 14 gp.

2. The Wedge. The passageway is narrow, forcing the PCs to move in single file. If they venture down this passage, Tyrinth casts *true strike* on herself and attacks the last PC in the marching order from behind. She attempts to bite and run before the PCs can launch a counterattack.

3. Blood in the Water. If the characters attempt to go in this direction, Tyrinth tries to get them to turn around by killing a few blind fish upstream. She lets the blood flow out from the cracks in the northern walls. Then she casts *ghost sound,* creating the sound of a young girl shrieking. The noise echoes eerily throughout the complex, making it nearly impossible to pinpoint the direction of the scream (Listen, DC 30).

4. Thump.

The current here is noticeably faster, and the floor is covered with slippery moss.

The water in the center of this room is 4 feet deep. The slippery moss means that PCs moving through this area must make a successful Balance check (DC 10) each round or fall prone. PCs who fall are then pulled toward the whirlpool in area **10**.

Trap (EL 1): To make things even more difficult, once the shortest PC enters the center of the room, Tyrinth pushes a 3-foot by 4-foot pile of debris from upstream (area **2**). Any characters struck by the debris must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) or lose their footing and be swept toward area **10**. The current travels 10 feet per round. Characters who have lost their footing must make a successful Swim check (DC 18) to regain their feet.

Debris Trap: CR 1; +5 slam (1d4); Reflex negates (DC 15); Search (DC 15); this trap cannot be disabled unless the PCs remove the debris the naga has pushed into area **2**.

5. Sleepy Fish.

This passage widens and the current slows. Tiny blind fish bump into your legs every time you move.

The naga attempts to distract PCs, using *minor image* to create a giant blind fish. The fish leaps out of the water several times and then disappears. While the characters are distracted by this, Tyrinth casts a *sleep* spell. She attempts to bite the closest sleeping character, dragging the victim into area **10**. *Note:* The naga cannot maintain the illusion and cast *sleep*.

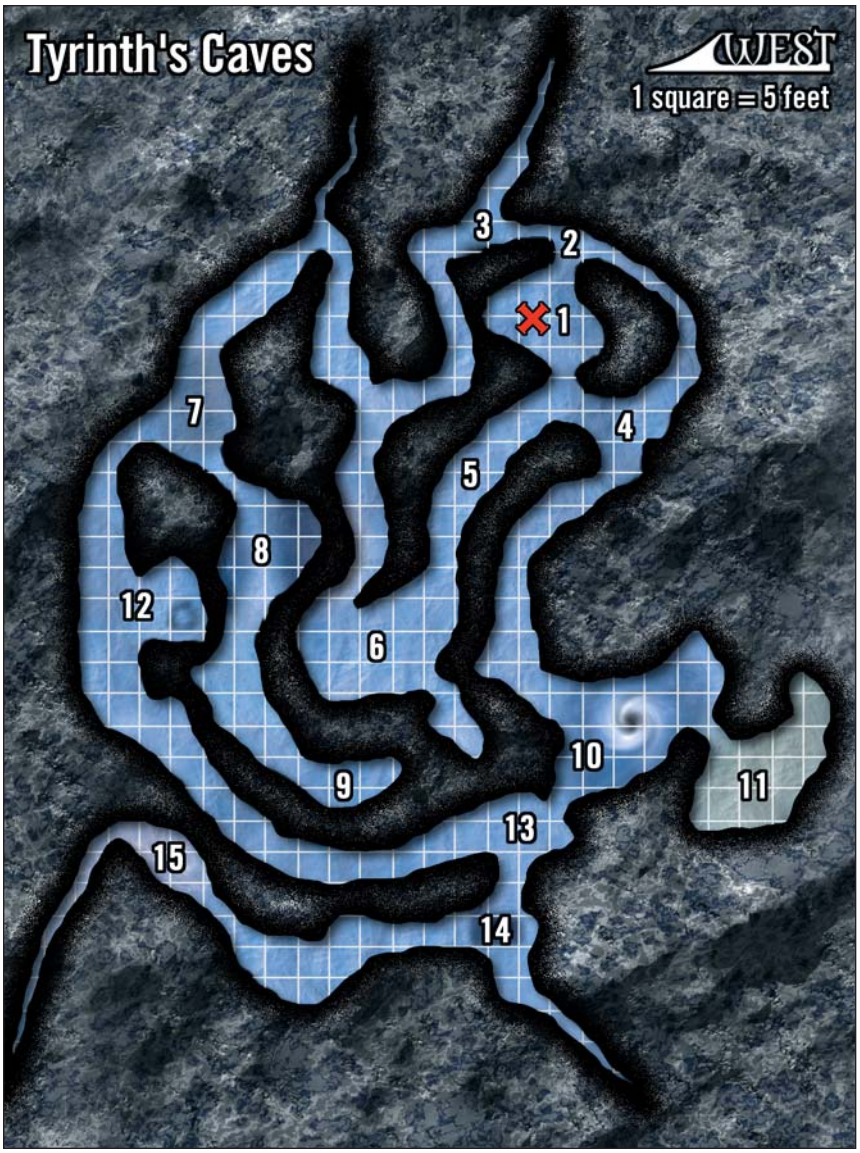
6. Eagle Eye.

The passage opens into a 25-foot by 15-foot cavern with a small cul-de-sac in the southeast corner. Another exit leads northwest.

Trap (EL 5): In addition to the danger of drowning, there is a collection of large rocks and debris that Tyrinth has stacked up on a ledge just north of the pool (between this area and area **13**). One round after the characters step into the room, she darts in underwater and slaps an innocuous rock against the south wall with her tail before darting out of the room again. This triggers the rockfall from the ledge above, which spills into a 5-foot by 15-foot area. All PCs struck by the rocks take 6d6 points of damage. Give rogues a free Spot check (DC 25) upon entering the room to notice the trigger stone. On a successful roll, they notice it's a little out of place and can warn the party not to enter the room right away.

Falling Rocks Trap: CR 5; +15 melee (6d6); Search (Spot) (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25). *Note:* can strike all characters in two adjacent specified squares.

Treasure: Characters who search the southeast cul-de-sac find a half-rotted hobgoblin carcass wedged in the corner. It is wearing rotting leather armor and carries a rusted falchion. It is also wearing one lens over its left eye. This is one lens of a set of *eyes of the eagle* (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 216 for rules about using one lens). Characters searching the southwest corner of the larger cavern can find the other lens with a successful Search check (DC 25).



7. What's So Funny? The water here is 5 feet deep. Tyrinth casts *Tasha's hideous laughter* when the characters enter this area. Those PCs who fail their saves and become prone by falling over laughing are in danger of drowning. (See the *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 85.)

8. Floating Debris. There is a pile of debris caught in a small whirlpool along the walls. The floor beneath the floating debris drops slightly to a depth of 7 feet. Characters searching the debris need to make a Balance check (DC 15) or slip underwater, getting drenched.

9. Hit and Run. If characters walk down this dead end passage, the naga casts *web* above the water line. She then swims below the webs and attempts to bite one character before fleeing.

10. Whirlpool. A whirlpool spins clockwise in the center of this cavern. PCs must make a successful Swim check (DC 23) or be sucked into it. Any character sucked into the whirlpool must succeed at a another Swim check (DC 20) or be pulled underwater and placed in danger of drowning (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 85). The water depth in this room is 10 feet. There is also a chance that the shambling mound which lives in area **11** is watching (30% chance). If so, it attempts to grab characters who are stuck in the whirlpool and pull them into its lair. Note that characters with magical effects such as *spider climb* or *fly* can easily free themselves from the whirlpool, or even aid companions who have been sucked under the surface provided they make a successful Strength check (DC 15).

11. Shambler.

This 15-foot by 15-foot cavern has an 8-foot-high ceiling that is completely covered with strange brownish-green, hanging, moss-like plants. There is also a thin layer of gray plankton floating on surface of the water.

Creature (EL 6): Tyrinth generally avoids this area because a shambling mound lives here. Sometimes the shambler reaches into area **10** to pull trapped animals (or humanoids) out of the whirlpool with its tentacle-like appendages.

Shambling Mound (1): hp 60; *Monster Manual* 162.

Tactics: The shambling mound immediately attacks anyone who enters its lair, fighting until slain.

Treasure: PCs who search the floor find 12 gp and 23 sp. PCs who search the mossy plants and make a successful Search check (DC 15) find a bent gold hair comb set with abalone inlays (10 gp value) and a masterwork bastard sword. The sword and hilt are forged out of a strange bluish black metal, and the handle is wrapped with black sharkskin. The sword is incredibly well balanced and the metal appears to be oiled. The metal is vakar, which gives the sword a +1 bonus to damage. Vakar also naturally exudes an oil that is especially caustic to anyone of pure elven blood. Any elf who is struck with a weapon made of vakar takes an additional +2d6 points of damage.

12. Naga's Lair.

Debris clings to the edges of this cave. The floor is strewn with broken bones, many of them humanoid. There also appears to be a large circle of rocks in the east corner, but water distortions make it difficult to see.

This is Tyrinth's home. She tries to keep characters from going near it, but if they do she attacks first and then tries to draw characters south into area **15**.

JOURNAL ENTRY

Delight in the wildness of the eternal screaming. The tithes one pays to gods, in the name of gods! We who breathe immortal air, when we must share its warmth in our ever dying lungs. Ceaseless it bears fruit, and then in withering and dusk, turns pallid. For them, for myself, for tales of our own mortal vengeance, the gods smile in mockery and irony. Now with my own twilight, I indulge in solemn coronation and crown myself king fool, the greatest of rogues, whose true tale will never be revealed. Heir apparent to lost titles, master thief of the kingdom's greatest treasure! All these years of illusion and deceit. Ha! Never once did their prying fingers find my trove. Those fools, those poor fools, gave me far more than baubles. Never can they retrieve what they've lost. They never peered into the well, not once. All their pathetic longing, all their wasted tears, all their vain prayers. It's too bad they never thought to make a wish.

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The underwater circle of stones is actually a nest containing four small naga eggs. Tyrinth attacks any PC who disturbs the nest, although if she feels like her life is in jeopardy she turns gaseous (using a *gaseous form* spell) and flees to area **10**.

13. Attack Point. If the characters wander this deep into the cavern, Tyrinth attacks them openly. Her favorite tactic is to use a *stinking cloud* or *color spray* spell, then attack from beneath the water. She arduously tries to keep characters away from area **12**. If she feels like her life is in jeopardy, she turns gaseous and flees to area **10**.

14. Pit. Water erosion has created a 10-foot-long, 5-foot-wide, 20-foot-deep pit in the middle of this intersection. PCs can spot the pit easily (the water looks considerably darker there). If Tyrinth attacks from area **13**, she tries to push PCs into the pit with underwater bull rush attacks. PCs who are pushed in (and who are carrying more than 10 pounds of gear) must make a successful Swim check (DC 10) or sink to the bottom and risk drowning (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 85). The pit is visible if PCs are actively looking, but it is more difficult to see if PCs are being attacked, especially if Tyrinth has cast a spell that obscures sight.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure was designed for a party of four 5th-level characters. It can easily be scaled upward to accommodate higher-level PCs by increasing the HD of either the naga, the shambling mound, or both. You can also increase the number of appearance for either creature. Other options to alter the difficulty include raising or lowering the water level, adding water vermin such as puffer fish (that shoot poisonous quills when scared), water spiders (that skitter across the water surface like waterbugs), or water snakes. You can also choose to have more of debris infested with the slimy doom disease.A final option would be to add the presence of another naga of the same type or possibly another species altogether (spirit or dark). You can also change Tyrinth's archtype to a naga with a higher CR (dark—CR 8; spirit—CR 9).

3rd- to 4th-level PCs: Remove the shambling mound. Alternatively, reduce both the naga's and the shambling mound's hit points by half due to a recent battle between the two. Lower the water level throughout by 2 feet.

6th- to 8th-level PCs: Double the Hit Dice of both Tyrinth and the shambling mound (14 HD for the naga; 16 HD for the shambling mound). Note that this change makes the naga and the shambling mound Huge. Add water snakes (use Medium-size constrictors and Medium-size vipers) to the cave complex.

9th- to 11th-level PCs: Triple the Hit Dice of both Tyrinth and the shambling mound (21 HD for the naga; 24 HD for the shambling mound). Add water snakes (Huge constrictors and Large vipers) and water spiders (Medium-size monstrous spiders).

12th- to 13th-level PCs: Same as above, and add one more 7-HD water naga (one of Tyrinth's offspring). Raise the water level by 1 foot throughout.

15. Moldy Bones.

This water here is shallower, only 2 feet deep. Piled high enough to clear the waterline in places are a number of bones in various stages of decay.

Characters rummaging through the bones must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 14) or be infected by the disease slimy doom (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 75).

Treasure: Also in the bone pile is a small greenish-white stone carved into the likeness of a young girl's face. A bard who makes a successful bardic knowledge check (DC 13) recognizes the face as Princess Adthene, who mysteriously disappeared thirty years ago. At the time, the king publically mourned her disappearance as "the loss of the kingdom's greatest treasure." This information can also be learned by making a successful Knowledge (history) check (DC 18). The stone radiates Conjuration magic if subject to a *detect magic* spell, and it functions as a *periapt of wound closure* if worn.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the well has been cleared out, characters will probably leave the caves and continue about their business. Depending on where you decide to place the well, it might serve the party as a unique hideout or shelter. It might also make a nice resting place within a larger dungeon.

If PCs have discovered the naga eggs in area 12, they might try to sell them on the black market. If they fail to find the eggs or simply ignore them, they eventually hatch, enabling Tyrinth's spawn to retake the well.

If PCs have found and identified the *periapt of wound closure* in area 15, they are left with a couple of options.

- The characters try to return the *periapt* to the royal family for a reward.
- The PCs keep the *periapt*, but it leads to trouble due to the accusations of others who are able to identify it.
- The ghost of Princess Adthene haunts the character who possesses the *periapt*.
- A combination of these events might occur: For example, the characters might discover that the *periapt* is haunted and take steps to return it, only to be accused of doing something untoward to the princess. Characters might even have to lead others to the location where they found the *periapt* to prove their innocence or have a cleric who can cast *zone of truth, divination* or *commune* to confirm the truth. Ω

Tim tells us, "I live in Staten Island, where I'm a cabinetmaker, a school teacher, and a guitarist (as well as a DM). The last time I told someone how long I'd been playing D&D, it made me overly self conscious for about two days. I'd like to thank my wonderful wife Cookie for loving me, even though she has no idea why her husband thinks about monsters all day."

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BROM

Tears for Twilight Hollow

Toil and Trouble

by Angel Leigh McCoy & Christopher Perkins

artwork by Brom and Chuck Lukacs • cartography by Christopher West

"Tears for Twilight Hollow" is a D&D adventure that presents the heroes with a mystery involving an evil cleric, a dead paladin, and a devourer. It is designed to challenge four 7th-level player characters (PCs), and PCs should advance at least one level during its course. For maximum playability, the party should include at least one cleric or paladin. As the Dungeon Master (DM), you can modify the challenges in this module for stronger or weaker parties by adjusting the number of monsters faced. See the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for alternative suggestions and the Dungeon Master's Guide, *page 102, for more information on encounter difficulty.*

This adventure is both event-driven and site-based. You should familiarize yourself with the tactics of the main villain before running the adventure; this will allow you to improvise should the PCs do something unexpected.

Monsters | Non-Player Characters (NPCs) | Objects | Settlements | Traps | Magic Items

Adventure Background

Thunderstorms rage often in the foothills west of the Sunset Mountains. Hefty winds blow unexpectedly through the valleys. In the not-so-ancient past, a temple to the evil god Talos spanned one such valley.

The temple, shaped like a statue with its stony face and hands lifted to the sky, was known as Tempest Tower. The clerics of Talos built a trestle bridge connecting the structure to both sides of the valley. The sole entrance was more than 40 feet off the ground and accessible only by the bridge. The clerics cloistered themselves in their temple, worshiped their stormy god, and buried their dead in the catacombs below.

One day, clerics of good Ilmater attacked Tempest Tower. A bloody battle ensued. The clerics of Ilmater killed the fleeing, profane priests and cast down the tower, which fell into the valley and dented the marshes. A few miles east of the site, the clerics of Ilmater constructed their own church to watch over the previously desecrated valley. Over time, a village formed around the church. The community became known as Twilight Hollow, so named because the sun sets behind the hills and shrouds it in premature twilight.

> Sweet lady,
> blessed twilight to my
> wretched day,
> send me your enemies
> and your critics. Send
> me the blind and the
> uninitiated, and I will
> show them the
> enlightenment that
> comes from agony.
> In your name,
> I am strong.
>
> (Prayer to Loviatar)

The recent woe in Twilight Hollow began years ago with two young girls—best friends. One became a lawful good paladin named Shaunnra Stillhand. The other girl, Andress Nagheson, showed early promise as a sorcerer but gave up magic in a vain attempt to emulate Shaunnra. They studied together under an elder cleric of Ilmater, but Andress couldn't measure up to Shaunnra. Before long, she left Twilight Hollow on a pilgrimage in Ilmater's name.

On the road, Andress's bitterness grew. She searched for, but failed to find, the power she craved. One cold night, a black-eyed pilgrim made Andress an offer. He showed Andress the darkness in her soul. He offered her a place among those who master pain rather than suffer passively. He revealed the power that could be hers, and then he gifted her with the means to make it happen. Andress chose her destiny.

While Shaunnra was swearing the paladin oath of Ilmater, Andress was taking the vows of servitude to Loviatar. Years passed before Andress heard that Twilight Hollow's

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed for a party of four 7th-level characters. However, the adventure can be modified for parties of levels 3-12 simply by adjusting the number and strength of the adversaries. Here are some specific suggestions for modifying the adventure for lower- and higher-level parties:

3rd- to 4th-level PCs: In addition to adjusting the strength of the foes and the lethality of the traps, allow the PCs frequent rest periods to rest and regain spells. Beware of challenges with an Encounter Level (EL) greater than the average character level, as these could prove fatal unless the PCs are well-rested and well-equipped.

Andress Nagheson: Make her a 1st-level sorcerer/6th-level cleric. Replace her *+1 spiked chain* with a masterwork scourge.

Harular's Claws: Make Harular a 3rd-level ranger, take away his *boots of speed* and *ring of protection*, and swap his magical melee weapons with masterwork ones. Reduce the levels of the following NPCs: Sestra (Rog1/Ftr1), Lyrr (Brd2), Vochnar (Ftr2), Ghosgor (Ari2/Ftr1), Glaster (Sor3), and Olipur (Rog2). Embrul and Thulk (area **U10**) and the brigands in area **U23** should all be 1st-level warriors.

The Devourer and *Cauldron of Desecration:* Make it so the devourer can never travel more than 20 feet away from the *cauldron*. Change the nature of the *cauldron* so that cracking or breaking it destroys the devourer, and make the *cauldron* easier to damage: hardness 8, hp 40, and no spell resistance. Have Marthos's ghost reveal that the best way to defeat the devourer is to destroy the *cauldron*, and award PCs 25% XP for "defeating" the creature.

Poison: Do not give any of the clerics of Loviatar poison, and remove the poison from the shortspear trap in area **U18** and spiked pit in area **U32**.

Multiple Monsters: Wherever the PCs encounter more than one monster at a time, halve the number of monsters faced. When in doubt, round down. For instance, in area V5b, the PCs might face one carrion crawler (EL 4) instead of three (EL 7). Likewise, they might Marthos's ghost without the ghost of his war horse in Event 7.

Difficult Monsters: Some monsters are just too tough for low-level characters and should be removed or replaced. For example, replace the will-o'-wisps in area **V5** (EL 8) with a pair of shocker lizards (EL 4). Replace the Gargantuan centipede in area **V6b** (EL 6) with two Huge centipedes (EL 4). Make the Large fire elemental in area **U25** a Small or Medium-size one, remove the wraith from area **U26**, and replace the hellcat in area **U29** with the rust monster zombie in area **U33**. Consider removing all undead creatures except the devourer from area **U33** and making the iron altar in area **U40** inanimate. In Event 6, consider removing the shambling mound and making Skriku an ordinary green hag with no druid levels or stirges.

Treasure: Remove chests #3 and #4 from area **U39**. Make Andress's mask and red robe (see area **U40**) nonmagical items.

5th- to 6th-level characters: PCs will find the adventure very challenging and should be allowed to rest frequently. If they are still having trouble, consider implementing some of the changes mentioned above (for 3rd- to 4th-level PCs).

Tempest Tower Machines: Make it easier for PCs to recover the digging machine (area **V5c**) and beholder machine (area **V5i**). If they bring these devices back to Twilight Hollow, they can use them to explore the catacombs under the village.

Levetron: Use Levetron's wisdom and healing abilities to full effect. He could have some useful insight that might enable PCs to avoid or overcome potentially lethal encounters.

Treasure: Remove chest #4 from area **U39**, and make the mask in area **U40** a nonmagical item.

8th- to 9th-level PCs: This adventure should challenge the PCs as written. However, if the heroes are having too easy a time, here are some easy ways to toughen the encounters:

Traps: Change *glyphs of warding* to *greater glyphs of warding*, make pit traps deeper, and increase the DCs for finding and disarming the traps.

Poison: Replace weak poisons with deadlier varieties. For example, clerics of Loviatar might coat their scourges with purple worm venom instead of greenblood oil.

Clerics of Loviatar: Add more of them. Some should be low-level, but a few should have statistics comparable to Bhell (see area **U27**). Add another xill cleric and animate the manacles on the walls in area **U40**.

Harular's Claws: Increase the levels of the brigands by 1 each, or simply add more members or creatures to Harular's retinue. Perhaps Harular retains an ogre mage henchman.

Lesser Planar Ally: Frequent casting of this spell has given Andress plenty of otherworldly allies, each one loyal to the pain goddess. Barghests, howlers, kytons, and rasts are appropriate guardians for the House of Torment or could be sent by Andress to accost PCs snooping around the village.

No Rest for the Wicked: Don't allow the PCs frequent rest periods. Use random encounters and hit-and-run tactics to keep them weakened and on edge.

10th- to 12th-level PCs: Many of the suggestions given above (for 8th- to 9th-level PCs) apply to PCs of these levels as well. Creatures and traps with low CRs won't pose much of a challenge, nor will they measurably deplete the party's resources and spells. To make the encounters in this scenario suitably challenging, consider the following modifications:

Andress Nagheson: Make her a 1st-level sorcerer/11th-level cleric and have her use *scrying* spells to keep tabs on the PCs during the course of the adventure. Give her a *pearl of power* that allows her to recast one 5th-level spell per day.

Creatures: You can either double the number of creatures in a given encounter (particularly if there are six or fewer creatures present), advance the creatures to a larger size category (as explained on pages 12-14 of the *Monster Manual)*, or give them some levels in druid, monk, sorcerer, or some other suitable class.

Cauldron of Desecration: Consider giving the *cauldron* (in area **U33**) three or four wraith guardians.

Clerics of Loviatar: Replace the weaker, 2nd-level clerics with 4th- to 5th-level ones. Elevate Bhell to a 9th-level cleric, and make Quel the xill a 5th-level cleric. Add several more xill underlings, with or without cleric levels, and create for them a refuge on the Ethereal plane that Andress can reach via *plane shift* spells should "the going get tough."

old cleric had died, leaving the village without spiritual direction. She returned and presented herself as a cleric of Ilmater. The *ring of mind shielding* given to her by the black-eyed pilgrim combined with her knowledge of Ilmater's rites and ceremonies allowed the masquerade to succeed.

Loviatar answered Andress's prayers, guiding numerous low-level devotees to the Temple of Ilmater. These sinister acolytes helped Andress construct a network of tunnels and catacombs beneath the Temple of Ilmater and raise a secret, subterranean shrine to the pain goddess. The church's gold went toward hiring a band of miscreants and outlaws to distract Shaunnra—the village's valiant defender—with petty raids on outlying farms and caravans. This kept the paladin from discovering what was happening beneath the village.

Through *divination* spells, Andress learned of a stone cauldron half-sunk in the marshes of the western valley. The magic cauldron, once employed by the clerics of Talos, would enable her to enslave the village and eliminate Shaunnra. Andress gathered her acolytes and *animated* undead servants and went to the valley to retrieve it. She bribed a local green hag druid for safe passage through the marsh by offering the hag three of her most devout lieutenants (who graciously sacrificed themselves for the glory of Loviatar). Finding the cauldron, Andress was soon confronted by its guardian—a devourer—which used its *control undead* ability to usurp control of Andress's skeletons and zombies. After watching her undead minions slay her living ones, Andress cleverly appeased the devourer by promising to deliver a paladin's soul into its clutches. The wicked duo agreed to help each other if Andress could "make good" on her promise. Alone, Andress returned to Twilight Hollow.

Andress tricked Shaunnra into the clutches of the devourer by claiming that *divination* spells had allowed her to locate the brigands' secret base. Determined to rid Twilight Hollow of the brigands, Shaunnra rode off with her squire, Marthos. They entered the western valley, drove off the druid hag, and stumbled upon the stone cauldron. In a battle worthy of song, the devourer consumed the paladin's soul while its controlled undead minions slew her faithful squire.

On a cold Harvesttide evening, Shaunnra's horse, exhausted and near death, returned home with its master's dead body. The people took Shaunnra to the temple. Andress acted out an unsuccessful *raising*, then reported to a worried crowd that she had learned "through means divine, that an evil being keeps Shaunnra's soul from its final reward." Andress had a modest tomb built for the paladin and used regular *gentle repose* spells to keep Shaunnra's body in stasis.

Under the shroud of night, the devourer came to the Temple of Ilmater, using Andress's undead creations and a *lesser planar ally* (a fiendish girallon) to transport the cauldron to the secret temple of Loviatar under Twilight Hollow. Fueled by Shaunnra's trapped life essence and its hatred for living creatures, the devourer has entered a compact with Andress, allowing the evil cleric to use the cauldron to spread suffering and lure more powerful life forces into its clutches.

Andress has perpetuated a vile ruse and a terrible blackmail upon the citizens of Twilight Hollow, essentially holding Shaunnra's soul for ransom. The payment is the continued suffering of the villagers. She parades the paladin's body before them, reminding them of their lost hero and of their own cowardice. She pretends her own curse is as tragic as Shaunnra's. It's a role she enjoys very much.

Adventure Synopsis

The heroes discover the village of Twilight Hollow, where they have the opportunity to solve a mystery, save a legendary paladin's soul, and end a dreadful evil. Their own self-motivation takes them on a quest to learn the source of the gloom that hangs over the village.

This adventure follows no particular timeline. The PCs can investigate the various locations in any order, though logic dictates a certain progression to their investigation. The three main locations include the village of Twilight Hollow, the ruined Talosian temple of Stormhold in the western valley, and the catacombs under the village where Andress is building her following. The PCs enter the adventure when they arrive in Twilight Hollow and get acquainted with the locals. Andress requests their aid in finding the soul of a holy paladin of Ilmater and sends them on a wild goose chase to the western valley. Items found in the ruins of Stormhold guide them back to Twilight Hollow. Further evidence eventually reveals the catacombs under the Temple of Ilmater and Twilight Hollow. Ultimately, the story's progression depends entirely on the PCs' choices and actions, and you shouldn't feel like you have to force them down one path. Several encounters could easily provide a tense, dramatic climax.

For the Players

In the course of their travels, the characters find their way to Twilight Hollow. You can arrange this in whatever way works best for you and fits into your ongoing campaign. Feel free to employ one of the hooks listed below:

- The PCs wander into the village looking for rest, supplies, or a market for their sellable items.
- A paladin or cleric PC receives orders from his church superiors or his god to investigate Shaunnra's death.
- A young bride traveled to another town or village for a family funeral. The family hires the PCs to accompany the bride back to her husband in Twilight Hollow.
- A dead body, trunk, pouch, or other such item from a previous encounter holds a letter. The deceased or owner of the item has family in Twilight Hollow. See the example letter below. If you do not use this method to bring the PCs to Twilight Hollow, you can alternately plant the letter in the ruins of Stormhold west of the village and have the PCs stumble on the note as they explore the area.

Dear Cousin,

I pray this missive finds you well. You may or may not remember me. I am Valkoris, from your mother's side of the family. I am son to Tylis, your uncle. My father has spoken to me of your stalwart heart, dedication to good, and the bravery of your traveling companions. If indeed, as I've heard, you have sworn to fight all that is evil in the world, then I beg you to come to Twilight Hollow on the western slopes of the Sunset Mountains. I offer you a chance to further do your family proud. Our troubles overwhelm us here. The soul of a great lady sleeps amid nightmares. I am a mere cobbler. I can do nothing. Perhaps you can.

With deepest regards,
Valkoris

Regardless of which hook you use, the adventure begins as the PCs reach Twilight Hollow.

PART 1: TWILIGHT HOLLOW

There's something unpleasant about Twilight Hollow. A doomed sobriety pervades the village, lending it a surreal atmosphere of separation from the rest of the world. Andress encourages this sobriety, subjecting the villagers to guilt if they show any happiness, for how dare they smile when Shaunnra's soul suffers in her martyr's prison!

Twilight Hollow has approximately 420 residents, most of whom earn their living as farmers and shepherds. The village also has its own baker, tailor, and blacksmith. The settlement developed around the Temple of Ilmater. Far off the trade route, Twilight Hollow doesn't see many visitors. Its self-sufficient population has little need for anything besides what they make for themselves.

The locals share a common philosophy about life, at least outwardly. Twilight Hollow is a lawful good village at its core. The laws in Twilight Hollow are strict and relative to lawful good beliefs. Although not all the residents are lawful good, they abide by the laws and maintain a peaceful community as a result.

Twilight Hollow (Village): Conventional; AL LG (LE); 200-gp limit; Assets 7,200 gp; Population 420; Isolated (human 96%, halfling 2%, dwarf 1%, other races 1%).

Authority Figures: Mayor Bryston Raezhi, male human Ari2, NG; Andress Nagheson, female human Sor1/Clr8, LE.

Other Notable Figures: Okrosh Danrat, male human Com7, LG (innkeeper); Mikiti, male human Com2, NG (barboy); Dhokkel Hammersong, male dwarf Exp6, LG (blacksmith); Valkoris, male human Exp5, LG (cobbler); others as noted in the adventure text or determined by DM.

Notes: Mayor Raezhi has lost his mind. Quite simply, the old man misplaced it shortly after he turned 70 and hasn't found it since. The other residents allow him to keep his position, realizing that the village has little need for a mayor. The church takes care of judicial matters. The laws haven't changed since the first clerics of Ilmater scribed them, and in other mayoral matters the town runs self-sufficiently. Mayor Raezhi putters around and raises his mayoral voice on occasion. The other residents of Twilight Hollow like him, but they don't bother to listen to him anymore. He resembles a baby robin, with tufty gray hair and pinched eyes.

Valkoris, the village's 48-year-old cobbler, has lived in Twilight Hollow his whole life. He has a wife and three daughters. The eldest daughter (Belsa, age 17) helps out in the cobbler shop. His middle daughter (Mercia, age 15) intends to join Ilmater's clergy. The youngest (Ternina, age 7) stays close to her mother.

PCs might have intercepted Valkoris's letter to his cousin, requesting aid for Shaunnra (see "For the Players" above). Determine his cousin's story and what happened to him (based on when and where you wish to introduce the letter to the

VILLAGE ENCOUNTERS

You can provide players with a rich environment to explore in Twilight Hollow by making the NPCs quirky and interesting. They don't trust the PCs because of Andress's false prophecy (see Event 2), but they're curious. When the PCs walk down the street, have them roll a Spot check to notice things in the street. Roll d% on the following chart to randomly select an event, or hand them out as you please.

01-20: *The curtains of that house over there flutter and attract your attention. Is someone watching you? The curtains close abruptly when you look up to see who it is. Maybe you imagined it?* (This could be anyone, as the whole village is curious about the strangers.)

21-40: *You notice that conversations stop abruptly when you pass people in the street. Everyone speaks in whispered tones. Every once in a while you notice someone pointing you out subtly to someone else as you go by, as if they were talking about you.* (Again, the villagers are merely curious.)

41-60: *A crow flies low overhead, then swoops up to perch in the branches of a nearby tree. There it watches you.* (This is just a normal crow.)

61-70: *A gaggle of children come running into the street from behind a building, laughing and playing. They halt abruptly when they see you, stare for a moment, then turn and walk away.* (The PCs remind these children of Shaunnra.)

71-80: *An old woman comes out of a building with a basket on her arm. Grumbling and talking to herself, she takes a few steps before noticing you. She slows down and stares, walking sideways as if afraid to take her eyes off you. Once past, she hurries her crickety, old steps.* (This is a superstitious woman, nothing more.)

81-90: *A middle-aged man steps out onto the porch of a house and leans against a pillar. He pretends not to notice you, but you can tell he's stealing glances at you as you pass by.* (The man is simply a curious bystander.)

91-00: *A yellow tabby scampers across the street. It stops and looks back at you for a minute. After a moment, it skitters under a porch.* (This is Sphinx, Andress's familiar. See Event 4 for statistics.)

UNFRIENDLY NPCS

In the beginning of the adventure, the citizens of Twilight Hollow are unfriendly toward the PCs. Andress's prophecy ensures that they distrust strangers. The PCs won't get much information early on, but they do get some. Any but the following questions receive a vague answer such as "I don't know" or "You'll have to ask that question at the church."

Who died? *(Mournfully) "Holy Paladin Shaunnra of Ilmater. Bless her that she may return."*

When did she die? *"Some time ago."*

Who's the head cleric here? *(Respectfully) "Holy Cleric Andress of Ilmater. Bless her name."*

Have you tried to *resurrect* the paladin? *(Sadly) "Yes."*

A PC can make a Charisma or Diplomacy check to improve a particular NPC's attitude (DC 20). If successful, the PC might receive more information from the sorrowful NPC:

"Shaunnra grew up here in Twilight Hollow. We all loved her very much. Several months ago, she set out to find the lair of some bandits who were preying on outlying farms. Her horse brought her dead body home to us. Her Holiness Andress couldn't raise her. Only she understands why, but she told us that Shaunnra's soul was trapped somewhere between life and death. We pray for her release."

PCs). Valkoris remembers when Shaunnra and Andress were young and remembers when Andress's parents died in an avalanche one particularly harsh winter. Shaunnra's family took the orphaned girl into their home. Valkoris also remembers how the two girls were inseparable, as much like sisters as any young girls could be. He remembers how they used to fight as well, like siblings.

Event 1. The Arrival

Twilight Hollow resembles most other small villages that dot the face of Faerûn. A stone temple dominates the village's profile. Most of the remaining buildings have wooden walls and thatched roofs. The aroma of burning pine spreads an ashen pungency through the air. The smell of a hearty roast rolls out from the local inn, and the blacksmith shop rings with the sound of metal striking metal. The residents bustle about, performing their daily chores—until they see you. The moment they spot you, their natural rhythm falters. They stop. They stare. They whisper among themselves, and they disappear a bit too hurriedly into their shelters.

Shortly after the PCs arrive in Twilight Hollow, dark clouds gather overhead and begin unleashing torrents of rain. As the PCs explore the village, use the "Village Encounters" sidebar to capture the fear and woe gripping Twilight Hollow.

PCs can secure lodging at the Double Bolt Inn (area **T1**). If they found Valkoris's letter (see "For the Players"), they might wish to question the cobbler (see above). Getting directions from suspicious residents requires a successful Gather Information check (DC 20).

Although the villagers are wary of strangers, those who run businesses (such as Dhokkel the dwarven blacksmith) can be approached and paid for services and supplies. PCs are charged standard rates for everything. Such dealings aren't likely to win the villagers' trust, however (see the "Unfriendly NPCs" section in the "Village Encounters" sidebar for details).

Event 2. The Funeral

Give PCs the opportunity to rest, regain hit points, or replenish supplies before continuing the adventure, but don't let them dally and grow bored. When you're ready, read the following to the group (or to a PC who would notice the event):

A cold rain drizzles down on the village, casting misery upon everything. As if on cue, a black-clad woman comes down the street at the head of a funeral procession. Her hooded cloak hangs heavy and wet. The woman carries a wooden staff so dark and knotted that it matches the expression of pain on her face.

Six pallbearers in black hoods carry a coffin. The ornate box glows with a soft magic light. The citizens of Twilight Hollow emerge from their buildings to stand in respect as the procession passes. Some hold up banners bearing the symbol of Ilmater. Some step forward to join the parade and walk along with the other villagers. The funeral approaches. You hear the mourners chant in a practiced monotone:

"Sacred Ilmater, hold your child in your arms. In these dark times, watch over her and protect her from harm. We pray not for ourselves, but for her. We pray that, one day soon, her soul will know rest or return."

Andress leads the weekly funeral procession, staff in hand. The procession leaves Shaunnra's Tomb (area **T4**) and moves in a counter-clockwise direction around the Temple of Ilmater. It ends back at the tomb, and the pallbearers return the coffin to its sepulcher. After leading the procession, Andress returns to the church with her acolytes of Ilmater.

Any attempt to interrupt the procession is met with jeers from the spectating villagers and a cold scowl from Andress. She says, bluntly, "Meet me later, if you wish, at the temple."

Keep in mind that, unless the PCs stay more than a week, they won't know immediately that the funeral occurs weekly.

Andress's Prophecy

Andress has made a prophecy to further isolate the people of Twilight Hollow from the outside world. She knows she can more easily maintain the villagers' ignorance and obedience if she insulates them from outsiders. Her prophecy accomplishes just that:

"A day of darkness yet awaits the people of Twilight Hollow. The day will come when a stranger arrives in town. This stranger comes for the innocent among us. This stranger has a handsome shell, but inside this stranger hides a broken and warped soul. This stranger knows us. This stranger has watched us. This stranger knows the blessings of the beast that plagues us. Death walks with this stranger."

Every man, woman, and child living in Twilight Hollow has heard Andress's prophecy and can recite it word-for-word. Andress herself is loath to share her prophecy with outsiders, although she has no fears about visitors learning of it. If the PCs question her or one of her acolytes, they learn only that Andress received the prophecy from Ilmater while endeavoring to *raise* Shaunnra from the dead.

Event 3. The Acolyte

If the PCs don't seek out Andress, she sends for them. Have an acolyte of Ilmater approach the PCs, targeting a paladin or cleric if there is one. The acolyte informs the PCs, very politely and respectfully, that Her Holiness Andress of Ilmater requests an audience with them.

The white-robed cleric stands with her head bowed respectfully. Large hazel eyes steal glances at each of you. In a voice as soft as breeze-ruffled grass, the young woman says, "I come in the name of Her Holiness Andress of Ilmater, Loyal Head Cleric of the Church of Ilmater in Twilight Hollow. She sent me to request an audience with you. I am to guide you to her or return to her with a message. What is your will?"

The acolyte of Ilmater, Gwenned, will answer the following questions. She believes she is telling the truth:

What does Andress want? *(Respectfully) "Her Holiness Andress serves Our Lady Ilmater, leading us as the shepherd leads her sheep. She needs your help to end our curse."*

How long has Andress been here? *"Her Holiness was born in Twilight Hollow."*

What do you know about Shaunnra? *(Sadly) "My heart is broken for the loss of our paladin, Shaunnra. We pray daily that her soul be freed and allowed to either return to us or to find its final peace."*

Where is Shaunnra's soul? *"We don't know exactly. All we know is that she is trapped between death and life, somewhere nearby."*

Creature (EL —): Gwenned is a devout worshiper of Ilmater. She believes that Andress and Shaunnra were very close (like sisters) and views Andress as a tower of strength. Gwenned does not suspect anyone at the temple of wrongdoing.

Gwenned, Female Human Clr2 (Ilmater): CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 2d8; hp 11; Init +0; AC 10; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +1 melee (1d6, light mace); SA turn undead 7/day, spells; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +5, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +6. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Extra Turning.

Spells (4/3+1, base save DC = 11 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, guidance, light, virtue;* 1st—*bless, cure light wounds*†*, magic weapon, sanctuary*.

†Domain spell. *Domains:* Healing (cast healing spells at +1 level), Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Light mace, wooden holy symbol of Ilmater.

Event 4. The Temple

If the PCs accompany the acolyte back to the temple, they find Andress waiting for them in the courtyard (area **T5b**).

Standing before the great temple is a rainworn statue depicting a crying man in flowing robes. Walking around him, you head down a long alley enfolded by the temple's walls. The smell of aged grime rises from the uneven cobblestones. Arrow slits eye you as you pass. You step beneath a raised wooden portcullis into a rain-soaked, diamond-shaped courtyard. A robed woman leans against a stone cistern at the courtyard's center. Your escort steps to one side and bows reverently to the holy woman. The woman bows back and murmurs, "My blessings for your service, child."

Suffering has put wrinkles at the corners of the cleric's eyes. Her pain tugs down the edges of her mouth. She wears her hair in ragged tufts, cut short and without style. Dressed in drenched robes of mourning, the cleric turns toward you with a welcoming gesture. She nods and attempts to smile, but her lips don't quite manage the gesture. "Thank you for coming," she greets quietly. "I am Andress. Welcome to Twilight Hollow." She pauses only briefly, then confesses, "I'm afraid I must beg a favor from you—one for which I can offer very little in return."

Andress feigns friendliness toward the heroes. She asks them to go in search of Shaunnra's soul, but she misdirects them to the ruins of Tempest Tower in the hopes that they, like so many heroes before them, will die in the endeavor. Presumably, the PCs willingly agree to aid the cleric. Andress offers them nothing in exchange for their aid. She does, however, help them acquire any provisions or nonmagical weaponry they require, within reason. She makes herself appear as helpful as possible. If the PCs request it, Andress gives them three *potions of cure moderate wounds* (one of which doesn't work).

Andress also provides more—albeit incomplete—information regarding Shaunnra's fate:

A veil of sadness falls over Andress' face as she speaks of Shaunnra. "I have only limited knowledge of her fate," she tells you. "Most importantly, I know that Shaunnra suffers. She suffers as few have ever suffered. I tried to *raise* her, but I couldn't. Something has her soul and won't release it. She can't go forward, but neither can she go back." Andress turns away and touches her hand to the simple stone well. "I prayed and took divine communion with my god. Ilmater gave me a glimpse of Shaunnra's circumstance. It was horrible. Her imprisonment serves no purpose but to amuse a merciless thing. This creature exists somewhere between life and death, in the valley to the west."

Andress' *ring of mind shielding* renders her immune to any attempt to *detect thoughts, discern lies,* or magically ascertain her alignment.

Andress gives the following answers to these questions or their equivalents:

Who has Shaunnra's soul? *"I don't know, exactly."*

Where did Shaunnra die? *"Her soul separated from her body in a valley to the west. Her horse returned from there, bearing Shaunnra's body. Adored Ilmater told me that a creature keeps her there still, feeding on her life force. May Ilmater take mercy on her, and on you, if you find her and free her from this abominable torture."*

Why did Shaunnra go to the valley? *"With my blessing, she went to find the lair of a band of ruthless brigands known as Harular's Claws. These brigands were attacking farmsteads on the outskirts of Twilight Hollow. Shaunnra wanted to end the threat once and for all. According to my divinations, Harular's Claws were hiding in the ruins of an evil temple."*

Was Shaunnra alone when she died? *"No. She had her squire with her, a young hero named Marthos. He disappeared that night."*

What do you know about Harular's Claws? *"They haven't attacked us since Shaunnra died. I suspect that she eradicated them—or something else did. I know little else except that the brigands are mostly humans, orcs, and half-orcs who take their name from their leader, Harular."*

Was there anyone in Twilight Hollow who wanted to harm Shaunnra? *"Of course not. We all loved her. She was our protector—our strength. Without her, we're horribly weakened."*

Creatures (EL 9): When Andress was young, she showed promise as a sorcerer. Unfortunately, she didn't pursue it. She did, however, acquire a familiar that has accompanied her on her journeys. Andress calls the yellow tabby Sphinx. The cat prowls Twilight Hollow day and night, serving as Andress's eyes and ears.

Andress Nagheson, Female Human Sor1/Clr8 (Loviatar): CR 9; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 1d4+2 (Sor) plus 8d8+16 (Clr); hp 52; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 14); Atk +7/+2 melee (2d4+1, *+1 spiked chain*) or +7/+2 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, masterwork dagger); Reach 10 ft. (with *+1 spiked chain*); SA rebuke undead 5/day; SQ familiar; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +14, Craft (trapmaking) +10, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +4, Forgery +4, Heal +8, Hide +5, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Move Silently +4 (includes +2 for cat familiar), Spellcraft +8. *Feats:* Alertness (granted by cat familiar), Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Leadership, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Finesse (spiked chain).

Sorcerer Spells (5/4, base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, ghost sound, mage hand, read magic;* 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armor*.

Cleric Spells (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/3+1, base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (×2), *detect magic, light, mending, resistance;* 1st—*bane, cause fear, command, curse water, endure elements*†, *entropic shield;* 2nd—*bull's strength*†, *death knell, enthrall, gentle repose, spiritual weapon;* 3rd—*animate dead, bestow curse*†, *cure serious wounds, invisibility purge, summon monster III;* 4th—*freedom of movement, poison, spell immunity*†, *summon monster IV*.

†Domain spells. *Domains:* Strength (feat of strength 1/day: +8 Strength for 1 round), Suffering (pain touch 1/day; successful melee touch attack bestows -2 enhancement penalty to Strength and Dexterity for 1 minute; does not affect creatures immune to critical hits).

Possessions: +1 spiked chain, ring of mind shielding, silver holy symbol of Ilmater *(amulet of undead turning), potion of cat's grace,* masterwork dagger, iron keys (to areas **T4**, **T5i**, and **T5l**, the manacles in area **U15**, and the chests in area **U39**).

Sphinx (Cat Familiar): CR 1; Tiny Animal; HD special; hp 26; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (touch 14, flat-footed 13); Atk +6 melee (1d2-4, 2 claws), +1 melee (1d3-4, bite); SQ improved evasion, share spells, empathic link; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +5*, Hide +17*, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +4. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (claw, bite).

*Cats receive a +8 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus to Balance checks. They use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.

Keyed Encounters (Areas T1–T5)

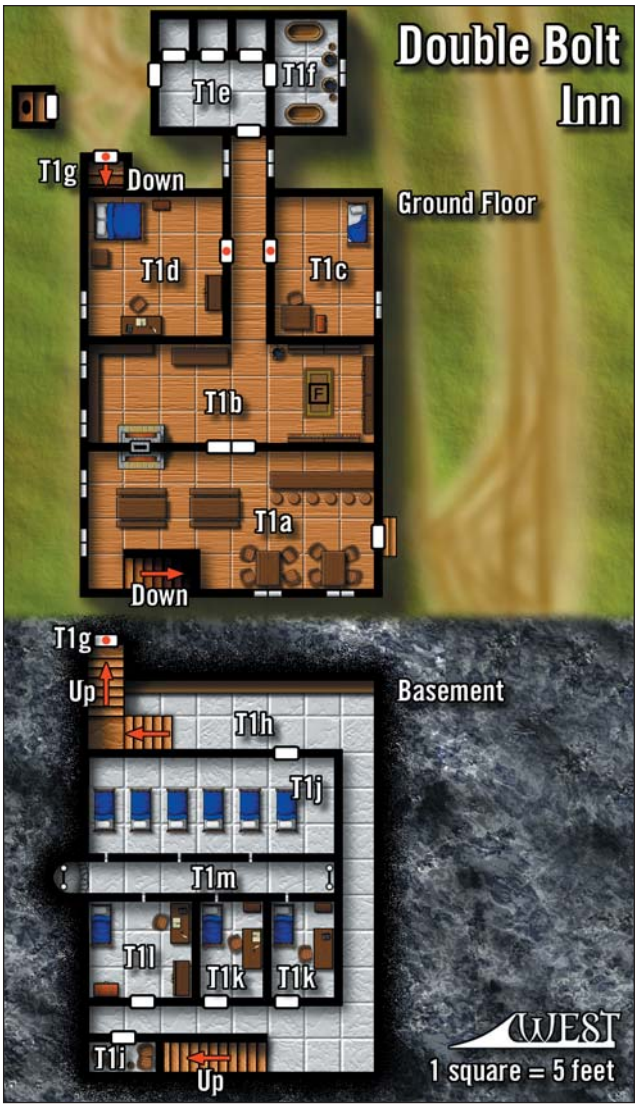
The following encounters detail key areas in Twilight Hollow, including the Double Bolt Inn (where the PCs are likely to stay), the Uhlstan farmstead (which has been taken over by Harular's Claws and Andress's acolytes), the statue of Ilmater in the village square, Shaunnra's Tomb (where the paladin's body is kept), and the Temple of Ilmater (where the PCs first meet Andress).

T1. The Double Bolt Inn. Locals and travelers alike come here for food, drinks, and companionship. While the PCs are in the village, the locals stay away from the inn, fearful of Andress's prophecy (see Event 2). The Double Bolt Inn offers a common sleeping area (see area **T1j**) for 5 sp/bed and private guestrooms (see areas **T1k** and **T1l**) for 2 gp/bed.

Creatures (EL —): The innkeeper, Okrosh Danrat, has trouble masking his suspicions toward the PCs. He makes them pay up-front and doesn't waste words with idle chat, but arranges their lodging, meals, and baths in a brusque, businesslike manner. He shows them to their rooms and goes back to work. He knows how to fight and will defend his inn. He adopted his nephew, Mikiti, after his mother perished in a fire and considers the boy his own son.

Okrosh has been *charmed* by Glaster, a wizard allied with the brigand leader Harular (see area **U4** for Glaster's statistics). The innkeeper allows members of Harular's Claws to use the trapdoor in the inn's kitchen (area **T1b**) to reach the secret cellars below (areas **U1-U7**), and Glaster has given Okrosh clear instructions not to share this with anyone.

Mikiti, the 16-year-old barboy, speaks only when spoken to, and only when necessary. His response to any question that



doesn't deal with the food or beverages at the inn is usually some variation of "I dunno." Mikiti's parents and sister were killed in a fire ten years ago. As a result, the boy is pyrophobic.

Like Okrosh, Mikiti has been *charmed* by Glaster. Unless the wizard's *charm person* spell is broken, Mikiti will not divulge information about Glaster, Harular's Claws, the trapdoor in the inn's kitchen, or the deep cellars below.

Okrosh Danrat, Male Human Com6: CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 6d4+6; hp 17; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +4 melee (1d6+1, club or 1d3+1 subdual, unarmed strike); AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Craft (cooking) +5 (includes Skill Focus feat), Handle Animal +2, Listen +1, Profession (innkeeper) +4, Ride +2, Spot +1, Swim +3, Use Rope +2. *Feats:* Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Great Fortitude, Skill Focus–Craft (cooking).

Mikiti, Male Human Com2: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 2d4; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 10; Atk +2 melee (1d3+1 subdual, unarmed strike); AL NG; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +7 (includes Skill Focus feat), Handle Animal +2, Ride +2, Swim +5 (includes Skill Focus feat). *Feats:* Skill Focus (Climb, Ride).

Development: If the PCs stay at the inn, Okrosh sends Mikiti down to the secret cellars under the inn to alert Harular's Claws. Harular orders Sestra and Lyrr (see area **U3**) to take turns spying on the PCs through peepholes in the secret corridor (area **T1m**). Encourage players to roleplay time spent in their rooms so that you can determine what the spies overhear (if anything). If the PCs detect the spy, he or she flees to area **U7** to alert Harular.

At least once per day, Andress's cat familiar (see Event 4 for statistics) visits the inn and begs either Okrosh or Mikiti to feed it morsels of food. If the cat spies anything out of the ordinary, it returns to the temple to warn Andress. If she suspects that the PCs are close to discovering her duplicity, she assembles her acolytes and heads to area **U33** while Harular's Claws delay the heroes.

T1a. Tavern. This wood-paneled room is warmed by a fireplace, above which hangs a small steel shield (nonmagical) emblazoned with the symbol of Ilmater (a pair of white hands bound at the wrist with a red cord). Four tables are arranged about the room, and a bar stretches along the wall near the entrance. A staircase descends to the basement.

T1b. Kitchen. A wooden counter stretches across the north wall of this well-appointed kitchen. Various cooking utensils dangle from hooks above the countertop. A worktable stands against the east wall near a hall that leads to the stablehouse. The southern end of the kitchen serves as a pantry, and the walls are lined with shelves holding foodstuffs, spices, soap, casks of ale and wine, and dishware.

Hidden beneath a frayed rug is a wooden trapdoor leading to a secret corridor in the basement (area **T1m**). Glaster (see area **U4**) has cast *arcane lock* on the trapdoor. The trapdoor is not locked otherwise.

***Arcane Locked* Wooden Trapdoor:** 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 18, 28 with *arcane lock).*

T1c. Mikiti's Bedroom. The door to this room is locked; Okrosh and Mikiti both carry keys. The room contains an unmade bed, table, chair, and wooden chest (unlocked) containing the boy's spare clothing and personal possessions (half-carved wooden figurines, tindertwigs, love letters from village girls, and so forth). An oil lamp and some burnt tindertwigs rest on the table.

Locked Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Open Lock (DC 20); Break (DC 18).

T1d. Okrosh's Bedroom. Okrosh locks his door (see area **T1c** above for door statistics) and carries the only key. The large bed is neatly made, and clothes hang neatly in the wardrobe by the door. A candle rests on a night table under the window, and a locked wooden chest sits at the foot of the bed.

Okrosh keeps the key to the chest in a leather boot in the wardrobe; finding the key requires a successful Search check (DC 15). The chest holds the **Treasure.**

The desk against the west wall has two drawers. The top drawer contains a quill, a jar of ink, some blank parchment, a wax seal, and a half-melted wax candle. The bottom drawer holds a half-filled bottle of good wine, a glass, and a book of heroic fables titled *Legends of War*, by Selpitarr Fearweaver.

Locked Wooden Chest: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; Open Lock (DC 25); Break (DC 23).

Treasure: The chest contains extra clothes, a suit of leather armor (Medium-size), and a sack of 70 gp and 360 sp.

T1e. Stables. Baled hay and sacks of oats are piled against the west wall across from three cramped horse stalls. Makiti cleans the stalls (and the nearby outhouse) every morning.

Two of the stalls are currently empty; the middle stall contains Shaunnra Stillhand's mount, a chestnut-brown war horse named Ruth. Okrosh consented to look after the horse out of respect for the fallen paladin.

Creatures (EL —): If the PCs can speak with Ruth, the horse gives the following answers to specific questions:

What happened to Shaunnra? *(Mournfully) "I carried my lady into battle against an unholy undead creature. With a rake of its claws, the monster killed her. A horrible mockery of my lady took form in the creature's ribcage. Overcome with sadness and fear, I fled with my lady's corpse in the saddle."* Ruth does not understand the devourer's ability to trap essences and cannot explain in clearer terms what happened.

Where did you encounter the undead creature? *"One day's ride to the west, in a valley of swamp and rubble, near a half-sunken cauldron of stone."*

What other creatures live in the valley? *"My lady and her faithful squire, Marthos, frightened off an insane crone. They also slew a creature that rose from the river. It had an orange shell and great pincers, but it was no match for Shaunnra."* The crone was, in fact, Skriku the green hag using a *change self* spell to hide her true appearance (see Event 5). The pincered creature was a chuul; its remains can be found at area **V3**.

What happened to Shaunnra's squire, Marthos? *"Marthos and his horse were killed by the creature that slew my lady. The creature was aided by its lesser undead minions—skeletons and zombies mostly."* Marthos and his mount now linger in the valley as ghosts (see Event 6).

Did you find the brigands in the valley? *"We saw no sign of the brigands, but before she was slain my lady was determined to find their lair and end their evil ways."*

Ruth, Light War Horse (Shaunnra's Mount): CR 2; Large Magical Beast; HD 7d8+21; hp 48; Init +1; Spd 60 ft.; AC 20 (touch 10, flat-footed 19); Atk +5 melee (1d4+4, 2 hooves), +0 melee (1d3+2, bite); Face 5 ft. × 10 ft.; SQ scent, improved evasion, share spells, empathic link, share saving throws; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7.

T1f. Bathroom. Two wooden bathtubs occupy this room. Water spouts diverted rainwater from a cistern on the roof to a pair of barrels under the window. Hanging from hooks nearby are two buckets used to fill the tubs.

T1g. Basement Door. This door is bolted from the inside (see area **T1c** above for door statistics).

T1h. Storage. Wooden shelves line the east wall of this otherwise empty room. They are stacked with mundane supplies including blankets, bottles, candles, firewood, flint and steel, boxes of tools, lanterns, oil flasks, ropes, sacks, and saddlebags. A wooden staircase ends at a bolted wooden door leading outside (see area **T1g**).

T1i. Broom Closet. A pair of brooms and other cleaning supplies are stored here. Okrosh also uses this room to store extra chairs for the tavern (area **T1a**).

T1j. Common Room. Six double bunks fill this room. (Okrosh charges 5 sp per night per bed.) Hooks on the east wall allow guests to hang their cloaks and other apparel.

PCs who inspect the west wall and make a successful Search or Spot check (DC 25) notice three tiny peepholes at eye level, spaced about 10 feet apart. See area **T1m** for details. Two members of Harular's Claws—Sestra and Lyrr—take turns watching this chamber through the peepholes. Any useful information they overhear is relayed to the inhabitants of areas **U1**-**U7** and eventually shared with Andress.

T1k. Private Guestrooms. Each of these rooms contains a single bed, desk, chair, and unlocked (empty) wooden chest.

Anyone inspecting the east wall can make a Search or Spot check (DC 25) to notice a tiny peephole at eye level. See area **T1j** and **T1m** for details.

T1l. Private Guestroom. This guest room contains a single bed, desk, chair, wardrobe (empty), and sea chest (unlocked and empty). The sea chest measures 4 feet long by 2 feet wide by 2 feet high and is carved with intricate mosaics depicting tritons astride large seahorses, octopi, and seashells.

T1m. Secret Corridor. This hall extends nearly the entire width of the inn. A fixed wooden ladder at the south end climbs 10 feet to an *arcane locked* trapdoor in the ceiling (see area **T1b**). Another ladder at the north end plunges down a 30-foot-deep shaft to area **U1** and is trapped (see **Trap** below).

The inn's previous owner built this secret hall so he could eavesdrop on his guests. He drilled six small holes in the walls and covered them with flaps of wood that keep light from leaking through to the other side. To eavesdrop, one must lift one of the flaps. Okrosh, the current owner, has no use for this hall. After buying the inn, he nailed down the wooden flaps. Mikiti, however, removed the nails to spy on guests, particularly adventurers. He found the thought of adventure both terrifying and intriguing, and his curiosity overpowered his sense of propriety. Mikiti, however, has not come down here since he ran into one of Andress's evil acolytes; he was hauled before Glaster (see area **U4**), *charmed*, and instructed not to speak of the hallway or the dungeon's inhabitants to anyone.

Creature (EL 4 for Sestra, EL 4 for Lyrr): One of Harular's Claws stands watch here, using the peepholes to spy on adjacent guestrooms. The PCs encounter either Sestra or Lyrr (choose randomly). Regardless of which NPC is present, the other can be found in area **U3**.

Sestra's black hair is pulled back from her face in a ponytail. Her tanned face and arms are scarred and bruised from countless fights. She is temperamental, but her rogue skills and riding ability serve Harular well.

Sestra, Female Human Ftr2/Rog2: CR 4; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 2d10+2 (Ftr) plus 2d6+2 (Rog); hp 29; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 12, flat-footed 13); Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/crit ×3, masterwork warhammer) or +5 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ evasion; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (trapmaking) +1, Disable Device +4, Hide +4, Listen +0, Move Silently +4, Open Lock +4, Search +1, Ride +6, Swim +5, Tumble +5. *Feats:* Dodge, Mobility, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack.

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork warhammer, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *potion of spider climb*, pouch containing 55 gp and 30 sp, necklace of brass dragon wyrmling teeth, ring made from an orc toe bone.

Lyrr is a slim weasel of a man with oily black hair hidden under a red leather cap. His features are pale and angular, and he wears a red and black vest that has seen better days. He serves Harular by gathering information on villages the brigands plan to raid; some find his dry wit amusing.

Lyrr, Male Human Brd4: CR 4; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 4d6; hp 16; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10); Atk +4 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, masterwork short sword) or +5 ranged (1d6/crit ×3, composite shortbow); SA bardic music; SQ bardic knowledge; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 6, Cha 15.

Skills: Appraise +7, Bluff +6, Concentration +2, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +9, Hide +6, Listen +2 (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +6, Perform (ballad, buffoonery, comedy, dance, lute, mime, storytelling) +9, Pick Pocket +4, Spot +2 (includes Alertness feat), Use Magic Device +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Combat Casting, Iron Will.

Spells Prepared (3/3/1, base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, daze, ghost sound, mage hand, open/close, read magic;* 1st—*charm person, expeditious retreat, message;* 2nd—*hold person, mirror image.*

Possessions: Masterwork short sword, composite shortbow with 16 arrows, lute, scroll of *undetectable alignment.*

Tactics: Sestra is not afraid to take the fight to her enemy, but she prefers to have allies watching her back. If confronted by hostile PCs, she withdraws to area **U3** to alert Ghosgor and the others. Lyrr is cowardly and uses *expeditious retreat* to outrun pursuers, finding courage only when he is joined by other members of Harular's Claws.

Trap (EL 1): Sestra has weakened two of the rungs on the north ladder, about 10 feet down the shaft. Unless a rogue points out the subtle sawmarks with a successful Search check (DC 15), the first PC who descends or climbs the ladder causes two of the rungs to break away. On a failed Reflex save (DC 14), the PC falls and takes 2d6 points of damage. The trap cannot be disabled (unless PCs take time to glue or replace the damaged rungs) but is easily avoided once detected.

Weakened Ladder: CR 1; 2d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 14) negates; Search (DC 15); Disable Device (n/a).

T2. Uhlstan Farm. This farmstead plays an important role in the story. Less than a year ago, eight-year-old Tamara Uhlstan died when she reportedly fell into a dry wellshaft over which the family's barn had been built decades earlier. As the story goes, rotten floorboards in one of the stables gave way beneath her, dropping the child 30 feet to her death. The horrified parents recovered the corpse and brought Tamara to the temple, but Andress was unable to do anything but administer last rites. (If questioned as to why she did not raise the child, Andress claims that, at the time, she lacked sufficient faith in Ilmater to call upon such a great blessing.)

The true fate of Tamara Uhlstan is far more gruesome: Andress's undead minions were extending the catacombs and tunnels under Twilight Hollow when they broke through the wall of a dried-up well, over which the Uhlstans had built their barn. The zombies clamored up the shaft, tore through the floorboards of the barn, and hid in the shadows. When Tamara entered the barn in the morning, the zombies ambushed her, dragged her below, and tore her limb from limb. Upon learning what had happened, Andress used a *make whole* spell on the girl's corpse, placed it at the bottom of the well to be found by her distraught parents, and instructed her zombies to fix the hole in the wellshaft.

Lamarr and Rellyth Uhlstan sold the farm to the church and moved away with their surviving daughter. Andress had a trapdoor built over the wellshaft in the barn and placed a pair of acolytes at the farm to guard this entrance to the catacombs. Members of Harular's Claws use the barn as a place to rest and hide their horses.

T2a. Living Area & Kitchen. This living room contains a leather couch, a pair of padded armchairs, an oak table, and a bookshelf lined with worthless storybooks and trinkets. The kitchen contains a preparation table, an eating table (with matching benches), a cabinet packed with dishes and crockery, a wash basin, and a fireplace. Cooking utensils and bundles of herbs hang from hooks on the walls. Drapes cover the windows.

Creatures (EL 2): The acolytes of Loviatar masquerade as a young, childless, married couple named Hlann and Lornyk Rasharr. Hlann and Lornyk are their real names, but they are not married and do not particularly care for each other.

Hlann is a tall, tanned fellow with black hair to his shoulders and icy blue eyes. Lornyk is a pale woman with chestnut-brown hair and a small, triangular birthmark under her left eye.

Hlann, Male Human Clr1 (Loviatar): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 1d8+5 (includes Toughness feat); hp 13; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 9 (touch 9, flat-footed 9) or 12 (touch 9, flat-footed 12—with armor); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1 plus poison, scourge; or 1d4+1/crit 19-20, dagger); SA rebuke undead 4/day; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref -1, Will +4; Str 13, Dex, 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +6, Heal +4, Knowledge (religion) +1, Spellcraft +1. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (scourge), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (3/2+1, base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*detect poison, guidance, read magic;* 1st—*bane, magic weapon, shield of faith*†.

†Domain spell. *Domains:* Retribution (strike of vengeance 1/day; see page 65 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* for details), Strength (feat of strength 1/day; see page 165 of the *Player's Handbook* for details).

Possessions: Dagger. Hlann keeps his black studded leather armor, scourge (see adjacent "New Weapon: Scourge" sidebar), and poison in the wardrobe in area **T2b**.

Lornyk, Female Human Clr1 (Loviatar): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 1d8; hp 8; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10 or 13 (touch 10, flat-footed 13—with armor); Atk +1 melee (1d8+1 plus poison, scourge; or 1d4+1/crit 19-20, dagger); SA rebuke undead 4/day; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +4, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +3. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (scourge).

Spells Prepared (3/2+1, base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, read magic;* 1st—*command, obscuring mist, protection from good*†.

†Domain spell. *Domains*: Evil (casts evil spells at +1 caster level), Suffering (pain touch 1/day; see page 65 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* for details).

Possessions: Dagger, key to trunk in area **T2b**. Like Hlann, Lornyk keeps her black studded leather armor, scourge (see adjacent "New Weapon: Scourge" sidebar), and poison in the wardrobe in area **T2b**.

Tactics: The clerics have two goals. Primarily, they attempt to camouflage their purpose at the farm and convince the heroes they're sincere and innocent. If that fails, which it likely will, they want only to escape so they can warn Andress that the heroes have discovered the farm.

T2b. Bedroom. This cozy room holds a pair of matching wood-framed beds, a wardobe with a single door, and a locked wooden chest (for which Lornyk has the key).

Locked Wooden Chest: See area **T1d** for statistics.

Treasure: Hanging amid the simple farmers' clothing in the wardrobe are two red ceremonial robes with hoods, two suits of black studded leather armor, and two scourges (belonging to Hlann and Lornyk). On a shelf above the clothing is a coffer containing six vials, each containing a single application of Large scorpion venom (see page 80 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details). The acolytes coat their scourges with the poison before entering battle.

The locked chest contains a sack of 155 sp, two holy symbols of Loviatar (made of wood, painted black, and shaped like the screaming visage of a human woman with a nest of barbed whips for hair), and three *potions of cure moderate wounds*.

Development: If Hlann and Lornyk suspect that their cover might be blown, they don their armor and ceremonial robes. With the scourges, poison, and potions in hand, they proceed to the shrine of Loviatar via the trapdoor in the Uhlstan barn, alerting Vochnar and the orcs in the process (see area **T2c**). The acolytes wait for their mistress in area **U33**. In this case, there is little treasure to be gained here.

NEW WEAPON: SCOURGE

The favored weapon among clerics of Loviatar is the scourge—a multitailed, barbed whip. The scourge is often dipped in a poison delivered via injury (such as greenblood oil, Medium-size spider venom, or Large scorpion venom).

With a scourge, you get a +2 bonus to your opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an enemy (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if you fail to disarm your enemy). You can also use the scourge to make trip attacks. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the scourge to avoid being tripped.

Scourge: Medium-size Exotic Melee Weapon; Cost 20 gp; Damage 1d8/crit ×2; Range Increment —; Weight 2 pounds; Type Slashing.

T2c. Barn. This wooden, two-story barn houses twelve horses stolen from distant farms and used as mounts by members of Harular's Claws. The brigands' horses are tied together in the middle of the barn. A wooden ladder leads up to a 15-foot-high loft filled with hay.

One of the four stables contains food supplies belonging to the brigands, as well as sacks of oats to feed the horses. The two middle stables serve as sleeping quarters for members of Harular's Claws and each contain six bedrolls. The last stable has an unlocked trapdoor in the floor; opening the trapdoor reveals a dry, 30-foot-deep well shaft with rough stone walls that are fairly easy to climb (DC 10). At the bottom of the well is a secret door leading to area **U8** and the catacombs under Twilight Hollow. The secret door can be detected with a successful Search check (DC 15) and pivots easily to one side.

Creatures (EL 6): This barn is currently inhabited by one of Harular's lieutenants—a half-orc fighter named Vochnar—and a group of six orc mercenaries. Vochnar and two of the orcs can be found in the stables; the remaining four orcs are playing a game with bones in the loft.

Vochnar takes orders from Harular and no one else, but he respects Andress and her acolytes. He has beady black eyes, course black hair covering his body, and a bat-winged helm.

Vochnar, Male Half-orc Ftr4: CR 4; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 4d10+16; hp 45; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (touch 9, flat-footed 19); Atk +10 melee (1d8+7/crit ×3, *+1 battleaxe* with Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization feats); or +3 ranged (1d6+4/crit ×3, mighty composite shortbow); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 8, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +0*, Handle Animal +4, Ride +3, Swim -1*. *Feats:* Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe).

*Includes -8 armor check penalty for full plate and shield.

Possessions: Full plate, large steel shield, helmet, *+1 battleaxe*, mighty composite shortbow [+4] with 30 arrows, 60 gp.

Orcs (6): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 146.

Heavy War Horses (12): hp 30 each; *Monster Manual* 197.

Tactics: Once the PCs are detected, the four orcs in the loft leap down into melee (using small piles of hay to cushion their jumps). Vochnar orders the remaining two orcs to hold off the heroes while he uses the trapdoor to flee. Once in the tunnels, the half-orc gathers reinforcements from areas **U10** and **U13** and heads to area **U26**, where he and his sergeants make their final stand. The fatalistic orcs left behind fight to the death ("for the glory of Gruumsh!")

Development: The war horses have brands identifying their rightful owners. If the PCs see fit to return them, they are rewarded 200 gp per horse.

T2d. Outhouse. This unremarkable wooden shack has a wild hedge growing on two sides of it.

Development: If the PCs spy on the farmstead, there's a 30% chance per hour that one of the farm's residents (Hlann, Lornyk, Vochlar, or an orc) visits the outhouse.

T2e. Grain Silo. This wooden tower has an access chute at its base. The silo is currently empty and not in use.

T2f. Well. This well was dug when the old one (under the barn) dried up. The shaft is 30 feet deep and contains 10 feet of fresh, drinkable water. A bucket rigged to a metal winch by an old, frayed rope allows one to fetch water easily.

T3. Statue of Ilmater.

Atop a tall, rectangular plinth of granite stands a life-sized statue of a robed figure. The sculpture must once have been exquisite. Now, it has rain stains that flow down the stone. The gray watermarks follow the contours of the carving, shadowing the folds of the statue's robes and dripping down the figure's stony cheeks like tears from its eyes.

This statue of Ilmater is somewhat diminished by the great temple standing behind it. A weather-worn inscription on the statue's base reads (in Common): "Ilmater protect us and give us faith. Your suffering brings us strength."

T4. Shaunnra's Tomb.

A small tomb stands behind the temple of Ilmater in a clearing enclosed to the north by dark trees. Iron vines weave over the tomb's recently mortared stone walls. An iron door faces the road. Carved into the stonework above the portal is a single word: SHAUNNRA.

Andress used village labor to build Shaunnra's tomb. The entrance is blocked by two doors: a locked outer door made of iron and a locked inner door of sturdy wood. Andress has the keys to both.

Locked Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 28).

Locked Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 23); Open Lock (DC 25).

A semicircular stone dais set against the far wall of the 20-foot-deep, 30-foot-wide tomb supports Shaunnra's coffin. The coffin lid is closed, and only Andress can open it without triggering the **Trap**. The coffin holds Shaunnra's body as well as the paladin's equipment (see **Treasure** below).

Trap (EL 2): Andress has placed a sonic *glyph of warding* on the coffin, filling the tomb with an ear-splitting scream when the lid is raised by someone not authorized to do so.

Sonic *Glyph of Warding:* CR 2; 5-foot radius; 4d8 points of sonic damage; Reflex save (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 19).

Treasure: Shaunnra's corpse, upon which Andress has cast *gentle repose*, is dressed in *+2 half-plate*. Clasped in the young woman's hands is a *+1 holy longsword* with a lion-shaped hilt, and resting atop the body is the paladin's *+1 large steel shield of light fortification*. The *shield* is painted with the sign of Ilmater (a pair of white hands bound at the wrists with a red cord).

T5. Temple of Ilmater.

The temple is made of enormous blocks of dark stone neatly mortared together. Jutting from the building's bleak, windowless façade are two galleries perforated with arrow slits. The entrance, which reminds you of a gaping mouth, stands between these galleries. A raised wooden portcullis gives the entrance the illusion of having teeth. A rain-drenched courtyard lies beyond this gate. Rising up from the center of the courtyard is the stone lip of a cistern.

The one-story edifice has a long entryway (area **T5a**) ending in a diamond-shaped courtyard open to the sky (area **T5b**). The roof of the temple is flat and enclosed by a 3-foot-high crenelated wall. Access to the roof is granted by a spiral staircase (area **T5l**).

T5a. Path of Sufferance. This walkway is open to the sky and watched by the archers stationed in areas **T5c** and **T5d**.

T5b. Courtyard. The portcullis is raised and lowered by the winches in areas **T5c** and **T5d**. It is normally raised but can be dropped with a standard action using either winch. Its great size makes it hard to lift by other means.

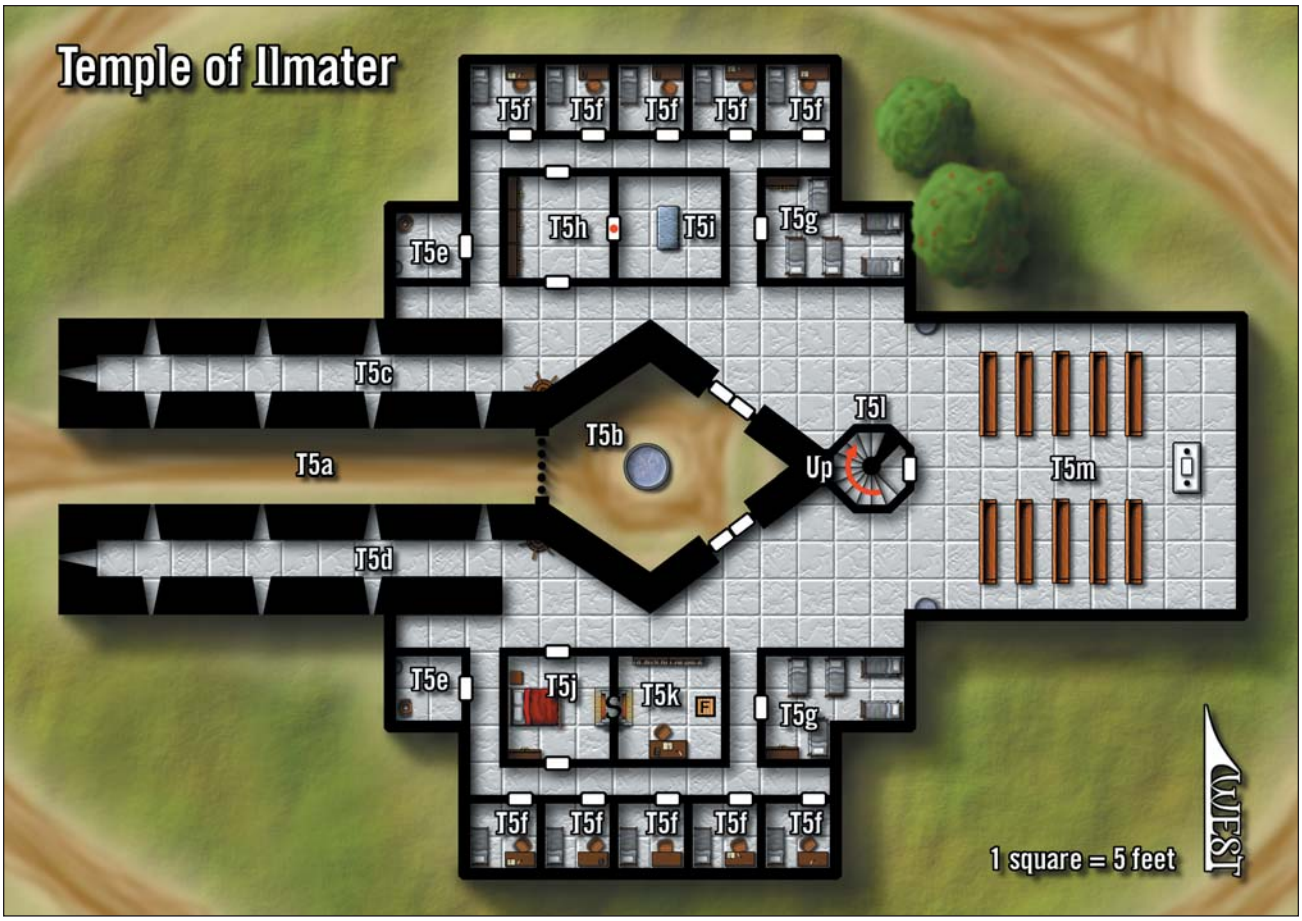
Heavy Wooden Portcullis: 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 60; Break (DC 32); Strength check to lift (DC 32). Up to eight Medium-size creatures can attempt to lift the portcullis at once (four per side).

The stone cistern in the courtyard collects rain water; in dry months, the clerics use *create water* spells to ensure that the cistern is never empty.

The two sets of double doors leading into the temple are not locked, but they can be barred from the inside.

Barred Wooden Doors: 4 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 40; Break (DC 28).

T5c. West Gallery. Eight arrow slits line this otherwise featureless stone gallery. The winch for the portcullis in area **T5b** is built into one wall.



Creature (EL —): A temple archer stands guard here. If an attacking force tries to enter the temple, he uses the winch to lower the portcullis and takes aim at foes with his shortbow. Behind the arrow slits, he has nine-tenths cover (+10 AC, +4 cover bonus to Reflex saves).

Guard, Male Human War1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 5; Init +4; AC 13 (touch 10, flat-footed 13) or 23 (touch 20, flat-footed 23); Atk +1 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, short sword); or +1 ranged (1d6/crit ×3, shortbow); AL LG; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +2*, Jump +2*, Ride +2. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Quick Draw.

*Includes -1 armor check penalty for studded leather armor.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, short sword, shortbow with 30 arrows, 2d6 gp in pouch.

T5d. East Gallery. This gallery is similar to area **T5b**.

Creature (EL —): One archer is stationed here. See area **T5b** for statistics and equipment.

T5e. Lavatory. Each of these two chambers contains a pair of stone wash basins carved into the wall. The basins are fed by small cisterns on the roof; stone spigots allow the clerics to start or stop the flow of water. (When the roof cisterns are dry, the clerics fill the basins with water from the cistern in the courtyard.)

In one corner sits a chair with a hole carved into the seat. A wooden bowl tucked underneath catches the waste.

T5f. Cloisters. Each of these ten rooms contains a wooden cot, a small desk and chair, and a tiny shrine to Ilmater (basically a latched box holding a wooden effigy of Ilmater and incense).

These rooms are used by Andress's acolytes. Five of the clerics are loyal worshipers of Ilmater, but the five most recent additions to Andress's order are clerics of Loviatar. Only the clerics of Ilmater are present, however, as Andress keeps her evil servitors busy in the catacombs below the village. (The good acolytes believe that Andress sends them abroad to spread faith in Ilmater.)

Creatures (EL —): The five acolytes of Ilmater who serve under Andress are named Gwenned (see Event 3), Paraster, Relx, Kendra, and Gaelan. None of them suspects Andress's true motives, although Relx has suspicions about one of his mistress's new followers, a foul-mouthed and unfriendly cleric named Dyrch (see area **U5**). Relx plans to cast *detect evil* on Dyrch the next time he returns "from abroad."

Gwenned and Paraster, Female and Male Human Clr2 (5): CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 2d8; hp 11; Init +0; AC 10; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +1 melee (1d6, light mace); SA turn undead 7/day, spells; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +5, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +6. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Extra Turning.

Spells (4/3+1, base save DC = 11 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, guidance, light, virtue;* 1st—*bless, cure light wounds*†*, magic weapon, sanctuary*.

†Domain spell. *Domains:* Healing (cast healing spells at +1 level), Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level).

TEARS OF ILMATER: THE ACOLYTES

Five acolytes of Ilmater live at the church—two women and three men. Andress chose them for their beauty, charm, and naïvete. She has warped these 2nd-level clerics, leading them to believe that she worships the same god they do. She keeps them relatively weak and discourages them from praying for offensive spells, advising that they should only pray for spells that heal or otherwise aid the villagers. The acolytes of Ilmater have no idea that Andress doesn't share their beliefs.

Possessions: Light mace, wooden holy symbol of Ilmater.

Relx, Kendra, and Gaelan, Male and Female Human Clr1 (Ilmater): CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8; hp 8; Init +0; AC 10; Spd 30 ft.; Atk +1 melee (1d6, light mace); SA turn undead 7/day, spells; AL LG; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +4, Diplomacy +4, Heal +5, Knowledge (religion) +6. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Extra Turning.

Spells (3/2+1, base save DC = 11 + spell level): 0—*detect evil, guidance, light;* 1st—*bless, cure light wounds*†*, sanctuary*.

†Domain spell. *Domains:* Healing (cast healing spells at +1 level), Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level).

Possessions: Light mace, wooden holy symbol of Ilmater.

T5g. Archers' Barracks. These two rooms each contain five cozy bunkbeds and a large wardrobe where the guards store their clothing and armor.

Creatures (EL —): Although the temple can accommodate up to 20 guards, Andress retains only half that number. At any given time, two guards are standing watch in the galleries (areas **T5b** and **T5c**). The remainder are sleeping or resting in their quarters. None of these guards suspects the truth about Andress.

Guards (8): hp 5 each; see area **T5c** for statistics.

T5h. Vestry.

Three ornately carved wardrobes stand against the south wall, across from a door set with a stained glass window shaped like two outstretched palms bound together. Two lit iron braziers on either side of the north door fill the room with a spicy yet sobering scent.

The wardrobes contain fifteen white robes with hoods and blue trim, and fifteen blue, cloth belts. The north door is locked (see area **T5i** below), and Andress carries the key.

T5i. Embalming Room. The locked door is set with a stained glass window. One can unlock the door by smashing the window, reaching through, and turning the handle from the inside. A *knock* spell also opens the door.

Locked Wooden Door: See area **T1c** for statistics.

A stone bier rises from the middle of the floor. The sides of the bier are chiselled with bas-reliefs depicting sacrosanct rituals and priestly communions. A mural on the far wall depicts an anguished man above a sea of tears. Under the mural rest several painted ceramic urns.

This is where bodies are prepared for burial (or *raised*, as the case may be) by the high priest of Ilmater. The mural depicts the suffering god. The urns hold various embalming fluids and preparatory salves.

T5j. Andress's Bedroom.

A heavy, wood-framed bed stands against the south wall across from a fireplace. Set into the stone above the hearth is a 2-foot-diameter wooden circle containing the sign of Ilmater: a stylized pair of hands bound at the wrists. The room's remaining furnishings include a narrow wardrobe, a bedside table with a candlestick on it, a brazier, and a faded painting depicting a martyr in chains.

Andress keeps nothing incriminating or valuable in this room. (The faded painting depicts a well-known martyr named Couran but is in poor shape.) A locked secret door in the back of the fireplace leads to a secret chamber (area **T5k**). The door is opened by turning the circular symbol of Ilmater above the fireplace a quarter-turn clockwise. (It is closed by turning the symbol to its original position.) The secret door lowers into the floor and can also be opened by a *knock* spell or brute force.

Anyone other than Andress who passes through the secret portal triggers the magical trap in area **T5k** (see below).

Secret Stone Door: 3 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 45; Break (DC 30); Search (DC 20).

T5k. Secret Library. The secret door to this room is trapped.

Trap (EL 2): Andress has rigged the secret door with a *glyph of warding* that explodes with red lightning when someone other than her passes through the portal.

Electrical *Glyph of Warding:* CR 2; 5-foot radius blast, 4d8 points of electrical damage; Reflex save (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 19).

A large rack of scrolls dominates one wall of this dark, 30-foot-square chamber. Against the opposite wall stands a desk with matching chair. The wall across from the fireplace is lined with a dozen niches that once contained statuettes, but these icons have been smashed to pieces, which lie near a wooden trapdoor in the floor.

The secret door is opened and closed on this side by turning the iron handle of the chimney flue.

The statuettes once depicted Ilmater and various martyrs, but Andress destroyed them. The trapdoor is not locked; below is a wooden ladder that descends a 30-foot-deep shaft to area **U15** in the catacombs.

The church maintains the area's history on scrolls stored in this library. The scrolls document each birth, death, and marriage in the village. If the PCs poke around in here, they have a chance of finding the following pieces of information with a successful Search check (DC 15). For every ten minutes that the PCs search, they find one piece of information in the following order:

- The PCs find birth records for Andress and Shaunnra. Andress just turned 31. Shaunnra would have been 31 next month. The records show that Andress's parents died when she was 10 (cause of death is not noted) and that Shaunnra's family took responsibility for the orphan.

• A scroll tells how clerics of Ilmater stormed the Talosian temple in the western valley. It lists those martyred in the battle. Shaunnra was named after one of the holy warriors who perished in the conflict.

• The PCs find a scroll listing Andress and Shaunnra as new acolytes in the service of Ilmater. The scroll describes the ceremony in which they took the vows to begin training as paladins. It is dated 15 years ago. The scroll also mentions that Andress and Shaunnra served His Holiness Ransoth, high cleric of Twilight Hollow.

• A scroll records the death of Ransoth six months prior to the start of the adventure, and his replacement by Andress shortly thereafter.

T5l. Stairs To Roof. The door to this staircase is bolt-locked, and Andress carries the key. The door, which is reinforced with iron bands, is difficult to break down.

Iron-reinforced Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 20; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 25).

The spiral steps lead to a flat rooftop enclosed by a 3-foot-high crenelated wall. One can stand on the roof and see the rest of the village, as well as peer down into the courtyard (area **T5b**) or stand above the galleries (areas **T5c** and **T5d**).

T5m. Temple.

This is the heart of the temple. Ten rows of pine pews face an enormous, sculpted and painted mural of the god Ilmater, whose sublime tears somehow convey both anguish and strength. In front of the painted bas-relief rests an altar draped in white cloth with two wooden candlesticks on it. The white incense candles give the temple a sour scent. A pair of stone fonts carved to resemble cherubim stand near the temple's foyers.

Andress loathes being here, thus she often assigns one of her acolytes the task of replacing the incense candles and conducting masses. (Her acolytes see these as tests of faith and are thankful to Andress for giving them so many chances to prove themselves in the eyes of Ilmater.)

PART II: TEMPEST TOWER VALLEY

This is where Shaunnra and Marthos came in search of the brigands known as Harular's Claws. Instead, they found death at the hands of the devourer and Andress's undead minions. PCs might come here, hoping to find clues to Shaunnra's fate or evidence of the brigands.

The ruins of Tempest Tower occupy a valley approximately five miles northwest of Twilight Hollow (see the "Adventure Background" for a history of Tempest Tower). Much of the trip crosses farmland that poses no threat to the PCs. Once they enter the valley, however, there are several challenges to overcome. The marsh that forms the valley floor is dotted with small islands and mires strewn with hazardous debris from the fallen trestle and tower. Furthermore, hot springs fill the valley with thick fog that clears only on the sunniest days. The fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 20 feet. Targets within 10 feet have one-quarter concealment (10% miss chance); targets 15 feet have one-half concealment (20% miss chance); and targets 20 feet and beyond have total concealment (50% miss chance, and must guess target's location). See page 133 of the *Player's Handbook* for concealment rules.

Event 5. The Valley

The trip across the sloping hills takes several hours. You see farmers tending their fields and shepherds walking among their flocks. You spot farmhouses with smoke curling from their chimneys. In the distance, mountaintops peek at you over the shoulders of the foothills.

Eventually, you top a small hill and the valley comes into sight. More a crevice than a valley, the sides rise at sharp angles. A thick fog lurks there, rising from the ground itself and sitting fat and heavy between the enclosing ridges on either side. The broken ends of a wooden trestle bridge hang from the hillsides. Sharp-edged remnants jut into mid-air. The trails that once continued to either side of the bridge now disappear in the forest, neglected and overgrown.

More impressive still are the shadows that cling to the valley. The wall of fog looms over you as you get closer. The ground takes on a sucking wetness that clings with muddy squelches. The smell of mildew and rotting vegetation offends your nose.

Specific areas of interest in the valley are noted below. The nature of the terrain makes it difficult for the heroes to know what lies ahead. Not only does the fog limit their visibility, the marsh itself gives few clues as to what lies beyond the current tangle of tall reeds, deadwood, overgrown bushes, weeping

willows, and other vegetation. Even the most navigable patches are overgrown with moss-draped trees, bushes, and vines.

The PCs have a few options: They can use fly spells and similar magic to avoid overland exploration, they can scale the ridges to observe the valley from above (although the fog will hide just about everything of interest), or they can plod through the marshes on foot or horseback. The following boxed text assumes that the PCs move across the floor of the valley:

> Moss-covered trees resemble hulking creatures that emerge from the fog to menace you. Vines threaten to trip you at every turn. Insects hum their disgruntlement at your intrusion. Just when you think the ground has begun to feel more solid, it gives way to mud that threatens to tug off a boot or send you sprawling face-first into the marsh. Creatures rustle the underbrush just out of sight. Moisture settles on your skin like a chilling death-mist. After a few minutes of plodding through the fog, you begin to see great chunks of slick, shattered stone jutting from the marsh like the slimy teeth and claws of some enormous, petrified beast.
>
> This would be a terrible place to die.

There are three types of terrain in the valley: boggy marsh, islands of thick vegetation, and warm-water streams. Each type of terrain presents challenges to visitors:

Boggy Marsh: The valley's hot springs not only cause the fog but also create small, warm mires and lagoons that collect fallen trees and other debris. The marsh rarely gets any deeper than 4 feet but cannot easily be navigated without a boat or raft. All PCs and horses are considered entangled. Entangled creatures suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls, a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity, cannot run or charge, and move at half speed. The boggy marsh has no adverse effect on spellcasting, however. PCs can use magic (such as *freedom of movement* spells) to avoid being entangled. As the DM, you might allow Escape Artist checks (DC 15) in combat to negate the penalties to attack rolls and effective Dexterity. A druid with woodland stride can move through this terrain without impediment.

Islands of Thick Vegetation: When the PCs or their mounts first enter an area of thick vegetation, they must succeed at a Wilderness Lore check (DC 18) or become entangled in the undergrowth. Entangled PCs can move only at half speed, can't run or charge, and suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity. To cast a spell, an entangled PC must succeed at a Concentration check (DC 15) or lose the spell. A druid with woodland stride can move through this terrain without impediment.

Warm-water Streams: These 5-foot-deep, slow-moving streams are fed by hot springs and choked with sludge and decaying matter. Any creature moving through or across a stream must succeed at a Swim check (DC 12) or become checked (unable to move in any direction). A checked PC or horse can make a new Swim or Strength check each round to resume normal movement. A checked creature can attack a foe within melee range, make ranged attacks, and cast spells without penalty.

Rubble: The toppling of Tempest Tower filled the valley with huge chunks of half-shattered stone. Climbing these slippery monoliths requires a successful Climb check (DC 25). The stony protrusions are spaced too far apart to use as a means of circumventing travel through the wet marshland.

The valley home to many crawling and swarming insects. These are a relatively minor nuisance, but reminding the PCs of their presence heightens the atmosphere.

There are two planned encounters in the valley: Event 6 occurs as the PCs make their way toward the ruins of Tempest Tower, and Event 7 occurs as they prepare to leave the valley. Feel free to include random encounters as you see fit.

Event 6. The Hag

With the departure of the devourer, the green hag Skriku has become the undisputed mistress of the marsh. Andress warned the green hag druid that the PCs might show up, so the hag listens for them. Skriku, her stirge animal companions, and her shambling mound "consort" can navigate the bogs and undergrowth without impediment, and the shambler is not visually hampered by the fog.

Creatures (EL 6 for the shambling mound, EL 8 for Skriku and her stirges): The hag tests the party's strength by ordering the shambler to attack the PCs. The shambling mound moves through the foliage and twisted undergrowth and has a chance of catching the PCs flat-footed. (It also has a 10-foot reach.) As the PCs battle the shambler, Skriku casts change self to appear as an old woman. She then uses *detect magic* to determine the number, strength, and auras of magic items in the party's possession. If the PCs overcome the shambling mound, Skriku appears before them in disguise:

> Your victory is tempered by the arrival of a withered crone. The old woman steps from the fog into view 20 feet away. Perched on each of her bony shoulders is a tiny, bat-winged creature with a needlelike proboscis.
>
> The crone's face splits into a wide grin. "I see now what the ruckus is about. Someone finally slew the shambling mound that's been eating my favorite pets! My name is Skriku. What brings you to my home?"

Skriku and Andress came to an understanding, and now Skriku rules the valley with Andress's support. They have a truce. Skriku suspects that the PCs have come in search of the creature that slew Shaunnra the paladin and her squire, but she is not prepared to impart any useful information.

If questioned, she imparts the following information:

- *"A paladin came to the valley looking for trouble. She found it in the form of a string of will-o'-wisps that lurk in the ruined foundation of Tempest Tower. The will-o'-wisps killed both the paladin and her squire."* (False. Although the will-o'-wisps are real, they did not kill Shaunnra and Marthos. Skriku just wants the PCs to destroy the creatures so she can explore the dungeon complex beneath the ruined tower.)
- *"A band of brigands came through the valley a while back. They, too, were killed by the will-o'-wisps. Nasty balls of light!"* (False. Andress told Skriku that the PCs might inquire about brigands in the valley. Again, the green hag wants the PCs to destroy the will-o'-wisps.)

Skriku allows the PCs to continue to the ruins unmolested, hoping they destroy the two will-o'-wisps there (see area **V5**). If the PCs are successful but weakened by the encounter, Skriku takes advantage of the situation and attacks. If the PCs destroy the will-o'-wisps without suffering any major injuries or losses, Skriku waits until they leave before exploring the dungeon under the ruined tower (areas **V5a-V5i**).

Skriku, Green Hag Drd2: CR 7; Medium-sized Monstrous Humanoid; HD 9d8+9 (hag) plus 2d8+2 (Drd); hp 57; Init +5; Spd: 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 22 (touch 11, flat-footed 21); Atk +14 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws); SQ woodland stride, animal companions, spell-like abilities, weakness, mimicry; SQ darkvision 90 ft., SR 18; AL NE; SV Fort +9 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +7, Will +10; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Animal Empathy +2, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +1, Handle Animal +1, Heal +3, Hide +11, Intuit Direction +3, Knowledge (nature) +5, Listen +11, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +3. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative.

SA—Weakness (Su): Touch attack; target must succeed at a Fort save (DC 13) or take 2d4 points of temporary Str damage.

SA—Mimicry (Ex): Skriku can imitate the sounds of almost any animal found nearby.

SA—Spell-like Abilities: At will, as cast by an 8th-level sorcerer (save DC = 10 + spell level): *change self, dancing lights, ghost sound, invisibility, pass without trace, tongues, water breathing.*

Druid Spells (4/3, base save DC = 11 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare, resistance, virtue;* 1st—*animal friendship, entangle, invisibility to animals.*

Possessions: Gnarled staff (used for probing the depths of bogs), locket showing the wife of a dead half-elf adventurer (10 gp), *potion of cure moderate wounds.*

Stirges (2): hp 5 each; *Monster Manual* 173.

Shambling Mound (1): hp 60; *Monster Manual* 162.

Tactics: If attacked, Skriku orders her stirges to fight while she flees into the fog and uses her *pass without trace* ability to remove all signs of her passing. She then follows the PCs underwater for awhile and carefully chooses her moment to attack. She prefers charismatic females to others.

The green hag has no trouble moving through the valley, thanks to her woodland stride ability. If the PCs stick together, Skriku casts *entangle* to slow them down.

Keep in mind that Skriku has above-average intelligence. She uses *animal friendship* and *invisibility to animals* spells and her Animal Empathy skill to keep on good terms with the other creatures in the marsh. Because she just wants to kill the PCs, she might drive or lure them toward one of the other monsters.

Event 7. The Squire

This encounter occurs after the PCs have wasted precious time exploring the valley and the dungeons of Tempest Tower. The ghost of Shaunnra's slain squire, Marthos, appears astride his spectral mount as the PCs leave the valley:

> The pale apparition of a tattered and torn young man emerges silently from the fog astride a translucent gray war horse. The spirit wears a tunic decorated with an embroidered symbol of Ilmater. His eyes convey an eternity of grief. Now, looking at you, the man's face shifts and changes, hardening into rage. You can almost sense his frustrated need for vengeance.

Marthos's spirit cannot rest because he feels he let down his mistress. The ghost roams the valley, searching for Shaunnra and bemoaning her death. It views anyone in the area as an enemy unless convinced otherwise. (Skriku the green hag was able to persuade the ghost to leave her alone.)

Creatures (EL 7): Marthos's ghost glares at the PCs for 2 rounds before it decides to attack. This gives the PCs a chance to talk to it or attempt to change its attitude (see **Development** below). If the ghost attacks, it does so in the third round.

Marthos's ghost wears a breastplate and pendant depicting the symbol of Ilmater. It wields a heavy mace that is treated as a ghost touch weapon. Having seen the devourer and what it did to his mistress, Marthos can provide important clues if the PCs encourage his ghost to speak. The undead squire believes that the devourer was acting on its own and knows nothing about Andress's involvement.

Marthos's spirit answers only the following questions:

Where did you die? *"Here in the valley, near the sunken cauldron."* Marthos is referring to the *cauldron of desecration* that once rested in area **V7** but now resides in area **U33**.

Who or what killed Shaunnra? *"It came from the fog with death in its eyes. My Shaunnra . . . my teeeeeeeeacher . . . She drew her sword and callllllled upon Holy Ilmater to fight beside her. I diiiiiiiiied. Shaunnnraaaaaaa. Shauuuuunnraaaaaaa. The evil stole your soul. It took you awaaaaay. Shauuuunnraaaaaaa . . . I will find you."*

Can you describe the thing that killed Shaunnra? *"An undead devil. It has no name."*

How can we save her? *"Free her. Put her soul to rest."*

How can we find her soul? *"It took her to the catacombs, the realm of the dead. Search there and you will find her."*

Where are the catacombs? *"Below the village, beneath a blanket of earth. Under Twilight Hollow."*

Why did he imprison Shaunnra's soul? *"He feeds on it even now, as we speak."*

If at least one PC vows to free Shaunnra's spirit, Marthos's ghost allows the party to leave the valley unmolested provided the PC succeeds at a Bluff or Diplomacy check (DC 15). Add 5 to the DC if the PCs tried to turn or otherwise harm the ghosts, and subtract 5 from the DC if one of the PCs is a cleric of Ilmater or is wearing a holy symbol of Ilmater.

Ghost of Marthos, Male Human Ftr3: CR 5; Medium-size Undead (Incorporeal); HD 3d12; hp 21; Init +6; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 15 (touch 15, flat-footed 1); Atk +5 melee (1d8+2, heavy mace); SA manifestation, frightful moan; SQ undead, +4 turn resistance, incorporeal, rejuvenation; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 14, Con —, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +4, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +6, Hide +10, Listen +9, Ride +7, Search +9, Spot +9, Swim +4. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample.

Ghost of Wildfire, Light War Horse: CR 3; Large Undead (Incorporeal); HD 3d12; hp 19; Init +1 (Dex); Spd fly 60 ft. (perfect); AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10); Atk +4 melee (1d4+3 plus 1d4 corrupting touch, 2 hooves), -1 melee (1d3+1 plus 1d4 corrupting touch, bite); SA manifestation, corrupting touch; SQ undead, +4 turn resistance, incorporeal, rejuvenation; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 13, Con —, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +15, Search +4, Spot +15.

Development: If the PCs successfully free Shaunnra's spirit from the devourer's clutches, Shaunnra locates her squire in the afterlife and absolves his guilt, laying his ghost to rest. This also lays to rest the ghost of Marthos's horse.

Keyed Encounters (Areas V1–V7)

The following encounters detail the valley ruins and the dungeon complex beneath the fallen Tempest Tower.

V1. Fallen Trestle Bridge. The iron-and-wood trestle that once connected Tempest Tower to the nearby ridges collapsed when the tower fell. All that remains are some rotted wooden planks and rusted iron girders jutting precariously from the ridges that enclose the valley to the east and west.

Each time a PC walks on a remaining trestle, roll 1d6. On a roll of 1, part of the trestle gives away underfoot, forcing the PC to make a Reflex save (DC 15) or fall.

The paths leading from the trestle bridge into the forest disappear after 100 feet or so. The paths have seen little use since the fall of the tower.

V2. Muddy Trail. This trail meanders through the valley toward the ruins. This is the route taken by Shaunnra, Marthos, and their mounts. More recently, it has seen travel from a half-elf adventurer who met his end at area **V4**.

PCs with the Track feat who succeed at a Wilderness Lore check (DC 10) can spot the half-elf's tracks through the mud. A roll of 15 or higher also reveals two sets of hoofprints, but these are several days older. PCs who stay on this trail move at half speed but do not suffer entanglement penalties to attack rolls and Dexterity (see Event 4 for details).

V3. Slow Stream. PCs following the muddy trail (area **V2**) must cross a stream at this point. A layer of harmless but revolting green scum covers the edges of the stream. See Event 4 for rules on crossing the stream.

V4. Moldering Corpse.

The landscape rises somewhat and offers more solid footing. Chunks of hewn stone and large slivers of wood appear out of the fog, littering your path as you near the temple ruins. The debris gradually becomes more prevalent, and you come to a wall. The wall curves in a wide circle and varies in height from 5 to 25 feet. The majority of that stone building now lies in rubble around you.

Gaps in the ruin allow you to pass through wall of stones. Due east of the ruin, among some smaller shattered stones, you spot a moldering humanoid corpse.

The corpse belongs to a half-elf rogue named Nellfar who came to the valley in search of treasure. He managed to slip past Skriku and her guardians but was caught flat-footed by the will-o'-wisps in area **V5**. He tried to flee but was eventually killed here. Skriku later found and looted his body; she carries with her a locket taken from the half-elf and keeps the rest of his gear in area **V6d**.

Development: The following information can be gleaned by casting a *speak with dead* spell on the slain half-elf (who was a neutral evil 5th-level rogue):

What is your name? *"Nellfar Shadowblade."*
Why did you come here? *"Treasure."*
What killed you? *"Orbs of light."*
How did the "orbs" kill you? *"With bolts of lightning."*
Where did you encounter them? *"Ruins."*

Any questions about Shaunnra, Marthos, Skriku, Harular's Claws or other valley denizens receive a standard response: *"I don't know."*

V5. Tempest Tower Ruins.

The great edifice that once stood here is now but a jumbled ruin surrounding you. The tall splinters of hewn rock form countless nooks and crannies large enough to conceal various lurking beasts. Emanating from within one of these crannies, near to the ground, is a dim yellow light.

The light emanates from a descending stone staircase set in the ground. The staircase is partially covered by a massive chunk of stone. Moving the 10-foot-wide, 20-foot-long, 12-foot tall stone is difficult given its size (Strength check, DC 40), but Medium-size PCs can squeeze through the narrow opening with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 15). Small creatures have no trouble slipping through the hole and descending the staircase. However, any PC who approaches within 5 feet of the staircase incurs the wrath of two hiding will-o'-wisps (the source of the dim yellow light).

Creatures (EL 8): PCs who approach the will-o'-wisps are attacked. The will-o'-wisps shun PCs with *protection from evil* or *protection from chaos* (or *magic circle* variations of these spells) cast on them, using their natural invisibility to hide until the warded interlopers depart.

Will-o'-Wisps (2): hp 40 each; *Monster Manual* 183.

Development: Shaunnra's *protection from evil* aura kept the will-o'-wisps at bay. Rather than explore the covered staircase, the paladin and her squire followed splashing footfalls—actually Skriku's *ghost sound* spell—southwest, where they encountered the devourer (area **V7**).

V5a. Undercroft. The damp, mold-encrusted staircase leading from the surface to this room switches back several times, descending a total of 90 feet. Assuming the PCs have a light source or darkvision, read or paraphrase the following:

The stone steps end at one corner of a roughly octagonal room supported by three stone pillars. Directly across from the stairs is an empty niche. Tunnels to the north and east collapse after 20 feet so so, but a tunnel to the west continues for 40 feet before opening into another room. Another mold-encrusted staircase descends to the south.

None of the rooms in this dungeon are illuminated, and ceilings are a uniform 10 feet high throughout. The niche in the northeast wall once held a clay golem, but this guardian was summoned into battle when the tower was attacked and summarily destroyed. A 6-foot-wide circular secret door (Search, DC 15) dominates the southeast wall and is opened by rolling it into the wall to the left. The collapsed section in the north tunnel can be cleared with 12 man-hours of work; beyond the collapse lies a hidden chamber (area **V5c**).

Development: Light sources or loud noise in this area alerts the creatures in area **V5b**, which arrive in 1 round.

V5b. Crawler Lair.

This room is roughly the same size and shape as the one to the east. Between four stone pillars, a large puddle of murky water has formed. The water spills into the room through a pair of narrow, rough-hewn passages in the north wall and exits through three similar passages in the south wall.

The tunnels to the north and south were formed by water erosion. They are tubelike, 3 feet wide, and carved from clay.

Creatures (EL 7): Three carrion crawlers entered this room through the north passages. One clings to the northeast pillar (within tentacles' reach of the room's entrance), one clings to the north wall, and the third clings to the ceiling over the central pool. They attack on sight and fight until slain.

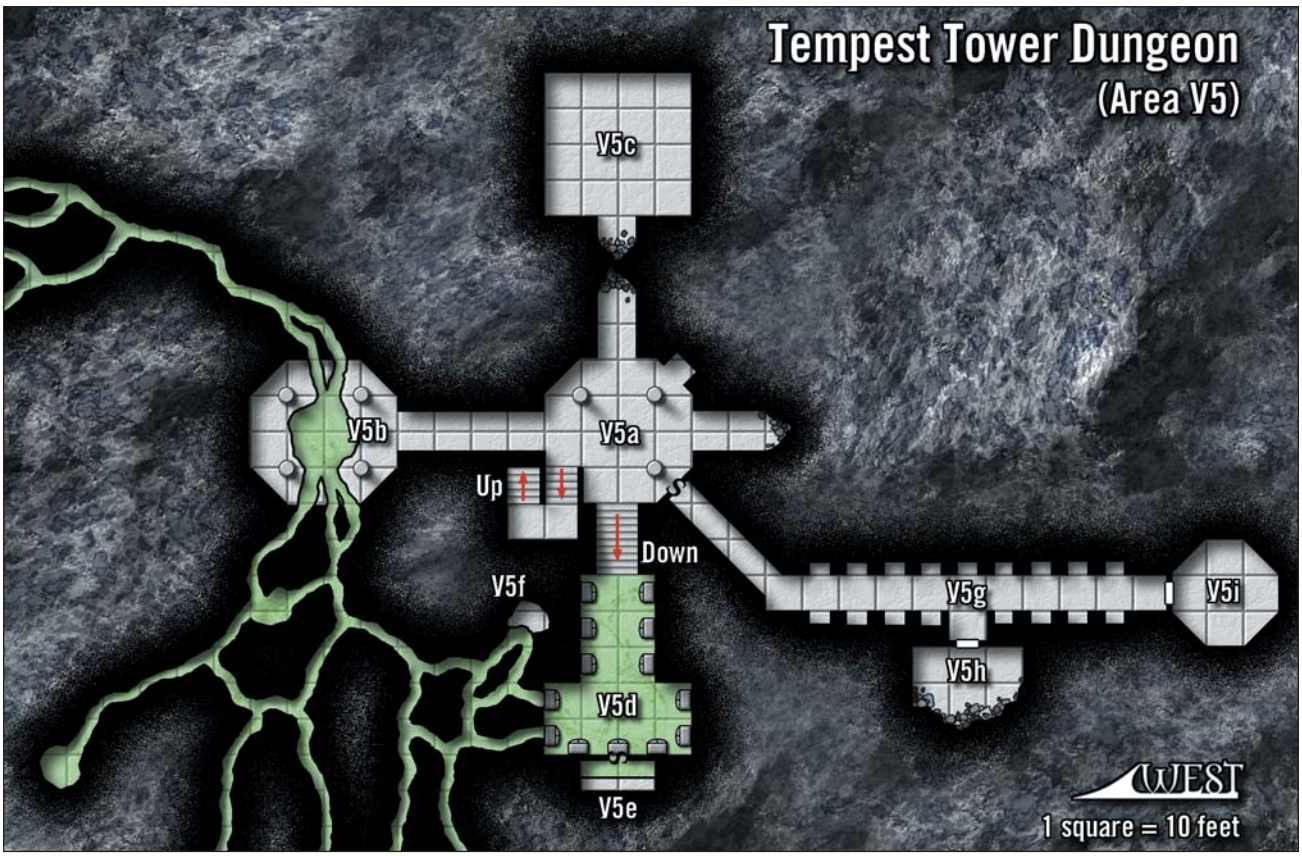
Carrion Crawlers (3): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 29.

V5c. The Digging Machine.

A thin layer of mud and slime covers the floor of this dark, 40-foot-square chamber. Hunched in the middle of room, nearly scraping the 10-foot-high ceiling, is a hulking creature with an insectoid head, enormous mandibles, and great claws that drag on the floor.

The creature standing in the middle of the room is actually a mechanical umber hulk built by the clerics of Talos. It is not an animated construct but rather a digging tool. A hatch in the back of the 10-foot tall hulk hides a compartment designed to accommodate one Small or Medium-size humanoid. The hatch can be locked from the inside.

The digging machine is controlled by a series of levers and pedals. Figuring out how the gizmos work requires a successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 20). The hulk can burrow (5 feet per round through rock, 10 feet per round through soft or loose earth) or attack. The four "eyes" enable the driver to see forward and both forward



flanks. The digging machine provides total cover for the driver, but it is not airtight and does not protect the driver against gas attacks. It also affords no protection against electrical attacks, against which the driver can make no saving throw (unless she bails out of the machine).

If the digging machine is reduced to 0 hit points, it releases its magical energy in a 20-foot-radius explosion of twisted shrapnel that deals 6d6 points of damage; a successful Reflex save (DC 14) halves the damage. *Make whole* and similar spells can repair the hulk (restoring its lost hit points) but cannot animate it; an *animate objects* spell accompanied by a *permanency* spell must be cast on the hulk to make it operational.

The digging machine radiates moderate Transmutation magic under the scrutiny of *detect magic*. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 25) renders the device inoperable for 1d4 rounds; a successful *break enchantment* spell (DC 25) negates the magic that powers the hulk.

Digging Machine: Large Construct; Hardness 10; hp 80; Init -2; Spd 20 ft., burrow 5 ft. (100 ft. through soft or loose earth); AC 17 (touch 7, flat-footed 17); Atk +6 melee (2d4+6, 2 claws), +1 melee (2d8+3, bite); Reach 10 ft.; SQ provides total cover for driver, construct; AL –; SV Fort +0, Ref -2, Will –; Str 23, Dex 6, Con –, Int –, Wis –, Cha –.

SQ–Construct: The digging machine is immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and death from massive damage. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain and is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, such as *disintegrate*).

Metal Hatch: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 10; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 28).

Treasure: The operational digging machine can be sold to an interested buyer for 32,000 gp, minus 400 gp per point of damage it has sustained.

V5d. Tomb of the Stormriders. The following boxed text assumes that the PCs enter the room via the north stairs. The text should be modified if the PCs enter through the narrow, tubelike passages to the west.

> The stairs descend to a T-shaped room flooded with murky water. Against the walls stand thirteen sarcophagi, their lids carved to resemble priestly figures with clenched fists and terrible scowls. Stylized lightning bolts adorn the sides and edges of these stone caskets.

The stagnant water flooding this room is 1 foot deep and carries a foul stench. The thirteen sarcophagi are not attached to the walls and can be moved or tipped over with a successful Strength check (DC 20). The sarcophagus lids are snug and must be forced or broken open.

Sarcophagus Lid: 2 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 45; Break (DC 23); Strength check to open (DC 18).

Twelve of the thirteen sarcophagi contain the mummified bones of Stormriders, clerics of Talos who wrought havoc across the realm before the fall of Tempest Tower. Water has seeped into some of the sarcophagi, moldering the mummies and their bandages. None of the mummies or sarcophagi hold treasure (but see below).

PCs who move aside the two sarcophagi in the lower west end of the room discover two 3-foot-wide, tubelike passages at the base of the wall. Both lead to a network of narrow passages that eventually connect to areas **V5b** and **V5f**.

The sarcophagus that stands in the middle of the south wall is empty and conceals a secret door. (PCs inspecting the sarcophagus can detect the secret door with a DC 15 Search check.) Opening the lid causes the whole sarcophagus to pivot to one side, revealing a secret vault beyond (area **V5e**). Unfortunately, this also triggers the **Trap**.

Trap (EL 6): Opening the secret sarcophagus door triggers a *greater glyph of warding* left behind by the Stormpriests of Talos. The *greater glyph* releases a blast of electricity that not only engulfs the sarcophagus but also courses through the water, potentially damaging anyone standing in the flooded room. (It does not affect PCs in the narrow passages west of the chamber.

Greater Glyph of Warding: CR 6; 5 ft. radius (plus see above); 10d8 points of electrical damage; Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage; Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31); Dispel (DC 23).

V5e. Treasure Vault.

Behind the sarcophagus you find another flooded chamber, this one considerably smaller. A stone shelf is built across the far wall of the room and holds eight hollow gourds made of ceramic and painted with violent scenes. Above these gourds, hanging on the south wall, is a small black shield adorned with three lightning bolts and a black halfspear, its shaft wrapped in dark blue snakeskin or lizardskin.

The items stored here represent **Treasure** left behind by the Stormriders of Talos entombed in area **V5d**. Lifting or removing the shield from the wall triggers a **Trap**.

Trap (EL 4): A 1-inch-wide hole in the wall behind the shield releases a blast of ungol dust when the shield is lifted or removed. The dust fills the vault for 1 round.

Ungol Dust Trap: CR 4; affects any living creature in the 10-foot by 20-foot room; initial 1 temporary Cha, secondary 1d6 temporary Cha + 1 permanent Cha, Fortitude save (DC 18) negates; Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 25).

Treasure: The twelve gourds contain magic potions, and the images painted on each gourd offer clues as to the nature of their contents:

Gourd #1 depicts a dwarf barbarian thrashing several enemies and holds a *potion of heroism*.

Gourd #2 depicts an elf casting lightning bolts while clinging to a ceiling and contains a *potion of spider climb*.

Gourd #3 depicts a human warrior fending off tentacles underwater with a spear; it holds a *potion of water breathing*.

Gourd #4 has a scantily clad human woman wrestling with a fiery salamander amid great flames; this fungal flask contains a *potion of protection from elements (fire)*.

Gourd #5 depicts a gnome wizard in rune-covered robes breathing fire at a band of kobold warriors and contains a *potion of fire breath*.

Gourd #6 shows an armored troll fighter tearing the heart out of a human foe and contains a *potion of bull's strength*.

Gourd #7 is black except for several pairs of evil, glowing eyes; this gourd holds a *potion of darkvision*.

Gourd #8 depicts a dead warrior with a pair of daggers stuck in his back and holds a *potion of sneaking*.

The mounted shield is actually a *+1 small wooden shield of lightning resistance*. The spear, which is wrapped in shocker lizard hide, is a *+1 shock halfspear*.

V5f. Dead Meazel.

The tubular, half-flooded, 3-foot-wide tunnel widens into a roughly circular, 10-foot-wide alcove with a dry ledge 1 foot above the water level. Slumped in one corner of this niche is a small humanoid skeleton covered in a layer of glistening, yellowish-brown slime. Still clutched in the skeleton's hand is a shiny dagger that seems to have weathered the passage of time and the dampness.

The skeleton is all that remains of a meazel recently slain by an ochre jelly.

Creature (EL 5): The ochre jelly still coats its most recent prey but lashes out at any PC coming within 10 feet.

Ochre Jelly (1): hp 66; *Monster Manual* 145.

Treasure: The dead meazel grasps a *+1 dagger* with the ability to render its wielder invisible (as the *invisibility* spell, cast by a 5th-level sorcerer) once per day. The dagger's market price is 2,763 gp.

V5g. Blasting Bones.

The walls of this corridor are carved with 6-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide, 5-foot-deep niches. Lying in each niche is a neat stack of bones and a skull with three black lightning bolts on its forehead.

The bones and skulls in the northern niches radiate faint necromantic auras when a *detect magic* spell is cast. The skulls also radiate faint Transmutation magic.

Creatures/Trap (EL 7): If the PCs open the door to area **V5h** or **V5i**, the skeletal remains in the northern niches animate and attack. The skeletons were created by clerics of Talos using the *cauldron of desecration* (see area **U33**). The skeletons gain a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saves, and attempts to turn them suffer a -3 profane penalty.

Each skeleton has a sonic *glyph of warding* imprinted on its skull. A *glyph* discharges when the skeleton first takes damage. An exploding *glyph* affects all creatures within 5 feet, including other skeletons; thus, skeletons in close proximity could set off each other's *glyphs*.

The *glyphs of warding* are not triggered by a successful turning attempt and cannot be disabled once the skeletons are animated. They can be *dispelled*, however.

The bones and skulls in the southern niches are neither animated nor magical.

Medium-size (Human) Skeletons (9): hp 7 each; *Monster Manual* 165.

Sonic *Glyphs of Warding* (9): CR 2; 5-foot-radius sonic blast; 3d8 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 17).

V5h. Mummification Chamber. Most of this room collapsed with the fall of Tempest Tower.

PCs can spend time digging through the rubble, but they won't find anything of value. The room was originally 40 feet deep, and buried under the rubble are four stone biers inscribed with symbols of Talos (recognized as such with a DC 15 Knowledge—religion check). Clerics would lay bodies atop these biers to be embalmed and mummified. The remains of a few tattered shrouds can also be found here and there.

V5i. Sphere of Power.

The door opens into an octagonal room with lightning bolts carved into the walls, giving them a cracked appearance. Floating in the middle of the room is a creature that resembles a 5-foot-diameter sphere with a large central eye, several eyestalks, and a glistening carapace.

Like the digging machine in area **V5c**, this is another device built by clerics and wizards of Talos. Resembling a beholder, it is held aloft by a *permanent levitate* spell. A hatch in the bottom of the beholder allows a Small or Medium-size creature to climb inside and operate the device.

Various levers and pedals enable the beholder to move forward, backward, side to side, up, down and diagonally. It can also rotate horizontally and vertically. The system of levers and pedals is quite complex, requiring a successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 25) to figure out.

The beholder's central eye serves as a window and comes equipped with a retractable shutter to protect the driver from visual spells such as *color spray* (although the driver is effectively blind while the shutter is down). The beholder is further equipped with ten magic wands, each one rigged to one of its ten small eyestalks. These wands can be easily removed and replaced. Due to the driver's limited field of vision (through the central eye), all eyestalks are rigged to fire forward, although the mobility of the beholder is such that a driver can "spin" the device as a free action and fire off a wand.

Using the beholder's wands is handled similarly to a wizard with multiple wands. Using a wand is a standard action, and switching from one wand to another is a move-equivalent action. The wands currently rigged to the machine are detailed under **Treasure** below.

If the machine is reduced to 0 hit points, it crashes. (The driver sustains normal falling damage.) *Make whole* and similar spells can repair it (restoring its lost hit points) but cannot animate it; *permanent animate objects* and *permanent levitate* spells must be cast on the beholder to make it operational. The beholder's sphere radiates moderate Transmutation magic when a *detect magic* spell is cast. A successful *dispel magic* (DC 25) causes the beholder to fall and renders it inoperable for 1d4 rounds; a successful *break enchantment* spell (DC 25) negates the magic that powers the metal beholder.

The beholder's ventral hatch can be locked from the inside to protect the driver. The hatch's statistics are given below.

Beholder Machine: Large Construct (5-foot diameter); Hardness 10; hp 80; Init +0; Spd fly 20 ft. (average); AC 18 (touch 9, flat-footed 18); Atk none; SA wands (see **Treasure** below); SQ provides total cover for driver, construct; AL –; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will –; Str 19, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis –, Cha –.

SQ–Construct: The beholder contraption is immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and death from massive damage. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain and is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, such as *disintegrate*).

Metal Hatch: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 10; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 28).

Treasure: The operational beholder contraption can be sold to an interested buyer for 24,000 gp, minus 400 gp per point of damage it has sustained. This price does not include the value of the wands.

The contraption comes equipped with ten wands: *color spray* (12 charges), *light* (16 charges), *magic missile* (5th-level, 11 charges), *ray of enfeeblement* (19 charges), *shield* (15 charges), *hold person* (6 charges), *darkness* (25 charges), *Melf's acid arrow* (19 charges), *lightning bolt* (6th-level, 5 charges), and *searing light* (10 charges).

Development: The beholder contraption is designed to fit through the secret door in area V5a, but getting it out of the dungeon will be difficult unless PCs use the digging machine in area **V5c** to carve through the block of stone that covers the staircase leading to the surface.

V6. Head of Talos.

A giant face appears through the fog. The stone visage lies half-sunk in the pillow of the marsh, its left eye and mouth forming deep orifices beyond which you discern a dark and hollow area. Many cracks mar the gray chiselled face, and weeds have taken root in the alabaster creases formed by its disturbing scowl.

When Tempest Tower was toppled, its head landed here and now lies on its side, half-buried in the marsh.

Stagnant water fills much of the interior. As the head lies on its side, all of the interior rooms are oriented such that the floors and ceilings of the old temple now serve as walls. A spiral staircase that once connected the hollow head to the rest of Tempest Tower has mostly collapsed and leads nowhere.

Apart from the gaping mouth, PCs can enter the head via its left eye. Its right eye lies below the water line but is also open. (Skriku uses the submerged right eye to enter and leave her lair.) The statue's nostrils and left ear are simply concave indentations filled with weeds.

Development: If the PCs make a good deal of noise, make a Listen check for the denizen of area **V6b**. (If the PCs are making no effort to silence themselves, assume they roll 0 on their Move Silently checks.) If the creature hears the PCs, it investigates after 1 round.

V6a. Behind the Face. The flooded space behind the "face" of Tempest Tower once consisted of two levels separated by a wooden floor. This floor splintered when the tower collapsed. Broken-off timbers jut from the stonework where the floor used to be, but the floor itself exists only as a rotten pile of timbers under the water.

Light enters this area through the left eyehole, and the walls are covered with weeds, mud and detritus. A layer of scum covers the water, forming a blackish-green skin.

Development: If the PCs make any noise, they attract the attention of the creature in area **V6b**, which emerges to attack. If Skriku has retreated to her lair (area **V6c**) and detects any disturbance in the water, she swims into this area and tries to grapple, pin, and drown one of the characters.

V6b. Centipede Lair. This room sits above the water line but is nevertheless damp. Hairline cracks in the walls behind the head's left ear allow slivers of light to enter from outside. Rocks and debris have been pushed under the sideways arch leading to the room, providing a crude ramp. The room itself is empty except for its lone occupant (see **Creature** below).

Creature (EL 6): A 60-foot-long centipede nests in the cool darkness. It does not consider the green hag tantalizing prey, but it attacks anyone and everything else.

Gargantuan Monstrous Centipede: hp 72; *Monster Manual* 208.

V6c. Skriku's Trophy Room. The open doorway that leads to this room lies 10 feet below the water level. Another open doorway leads to area **T6d**. Finding either portal in the murky water requires a successful Search check (DC 15).

This sideways room is 15 feet wide. The green hag sleeps on a bed of mud on the "floor" of the chamber. However, swimming PCs who break through the skum that coats the surface of the water can find a 20-foot-high pocket of air and a doorway leading to the ruined spiral staircase.

Hanging from the "ceiling" of the room by fibrous ropes made of reeds and dried intestines, suspended mere inches above the water line, are four moldering humanoid corpses. These are the remains of a band of adventurers who stumbled upon the hag while exploring the valley. These fallen heroes have been stripped of their belongings (Skriku placed the most valuable items in area **T6d**) and hang as sanguine trophies. The bodies dangling from four iron rungs bolted to the ceiling but can be easily cut down.

Creature (EL 7 if Skriku is present): If she has withdrawn to her lair, Skriku is either resting atop her bed of mud (30% chance) or perched in the doorway to the spiral staircase, admiring her trophies. She fights to the death to defend her lair and her treasure.

V6d. Skriku's Trove. This 30-foot-wide, 40-foot-high, partially flooded room contains the green hag's hoard, detailed below.

Treasure: Above the water line, to the right of the entrance, is a shattered wooden beam jutting from the wall. Balanced atop this beam is a locked wooden chest filled to the brim with purloined valuables:

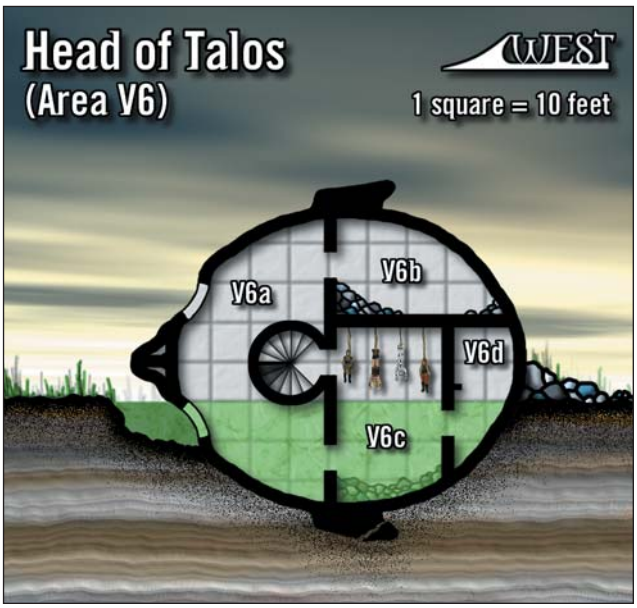
- a sack containing 326 gp and 125 sp;
- three potions *(darkvision, delay poison, levitate);*
- an arcane scroll (*claws of darkness;* see page 67 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*);
- a divine scroll *(dominate animal);*
- a *bag of holding* (type 1) containing a suit of *+1 studded leather armor*, a suit of masterwork half-plate, a silver basilisk statuette (40 gp) with two *beads of force* for eyes, a gold chalice with amethyst inlays (550 gp), a grappling hook tied to 50 feet of silk rope, a healer's kit, three bedrolls, and three backpacks stuffed with trail rations (enough for 15 days).

V7. Marthos's Diary.

Through the clouds of insects you spot a hemispherical indentation in the mud. Half-filled with water and mud, the earthen bowl suggests that something large and round once occupied the space. Scattered among the reeds are numerous chunks of broken stone, as well as humanoid bones.

With the help of Andress's undead minions and a fiendish girallon *lesser planar ally,* the devourer removed the *cauldron of desecration* that once sat in the bowl-shaped indentation; both the devourer and its foul cauldron now reside in the chambers beneath Twilight Hollow (see area **U33**). Shaunnra struck down a handful of skeletons before she was vanquished by the devourer; the scattered humanoid bones are all that remain of these once-*animated* servants.

PCs who inspect the area and make a successful Search check (DC 15) find the rotted, mostly-devoured remains of a light war horse and its rider: the remains of Marthos and his mount. Tucked in one of the dead squire's saddlebags is a leather-bound diary. Moisture has taken its toll, warping the paper and smearing the ink. However, one section of Marthos's



diary remains intact. It reads: "My lady plans to travel to the far side of the mountains and find the elusive brigands known as Harular's Claws. I must accompany her and help her overcome this foul scourge of the tradeways. Shaunnra has heard rumors that Harular has dragon's blood coursing through his veins. As Shaunnra's squire, I've learned a great deal, but as her adventuring partner, I will have a chance to prove myself. My life begins soon."

PART III: UNDER TWILIGHT HOLLOW

The PCs might return to Twilight Hollow several times between excursions to the ruins of Tempest Tower. The village itself does not change much in their absence, although the catacombs beneath the village continue to shelter the sinister brigands known as Harular's Claws, the vile worshipers of Loviatar, and the dreaded creature that has captured Shaunnra's soul.

Eventually the PCs should discover (either on their own or by talking to Marthos's ghost or the children in Events 8 and 9) the secret catacombs beneath the village. There are several entrances into the catacombs:

- The Double Bolt Inn (area **T1**): A ladder in the cellar (area **T1m**) leads to area **U1**.
- The Uhlstan Farm (area **T2**): A hidden wellshaft in the barn (area **T2c**) leads to area **U8**.
- The Temple of Ilmater (area **T5**): A trapdoor in the secret library (area **T5k**) leads to area **U15**.

If Andress has no reason to believe that the PCs have found the catacombs, she leaves them be. Feel free to allow the PCs a chance to rest and recuperate in the town. However, if she learns that the PCs have found the catacombs, she instructs Harular to eliminate them (see Event 10).

Event 8. The Innocents

This event can occur anytime after the PCs return from the ruins of Tempest Tower, preferably before they find a way into the catacombs. Run this encounter at a time when the PCs are resting, searching the village, questioning the locals, or merely killing time.

Creatures (EL —): Nine-year-old Renadra Wrenbow develops a crush on a male PC or idolizes a female PC (determine randomly, or chose the character with the highest Charisma score). Renadra follows the PC around as much as possible without openly revealing herself. She lurks in the shadows and behind the corners of buildings, watching the character with her big, brown eyes. Her 8-year-old little brother, Brenor, tags along, clutching his toy wooden sword and shield. He wears a home-made cape with fake magic symbols embroidered at the collar, and he has pieces of cloth tied around his wrists to resemble gauntlets.

Whenever the heroes return from the ruins, have them roll a Spot check (DC 10) to glimpse Renadra and Brenor spying on them. If the PCs approach the children openly, they run away. Their father has warned them of big trouble should they talk to or approach the strangers.

Renadra has experienced Andress's mean side. The priestess caught Renadra innocently poking through Shaunnra's room at the church following a weekly sermon. She threatened the child with punishments a cleric of Ilmater would never think to inflict. Renadra fled and harbors a strong fear of Andress.

If cornered by the PCs, Renadra explains that she's not allowed to speak with them. She explains that the town doesn't trust the PCs because Andress says that all strangers want to hurt the people of Twilight Hollow. If questioned further, she informs them of Andress's prophecy (see Event 2). If the PCs succeed at a Diplomacy or Intimidate check (DC 15), she might even tell them that Andress threatened to poke out her eyes once. Renadra has also heard stories from other kids in town claiming that "Her Ladyship" curses small children who make her cross; this is what many children suspect happened to poor Tamara Uhlstan (see area **T2**). Renadra's parents and Andress dismiss her accusations as the overactive imaginings of a child.

Renadra and Brenor Wrenbow, Human Com1 (2): CR —; Small Humanoid; HD 1d4-1; hp 2 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 11); Atk -2 melee (1d2-2 subdual, punch or wooden sword); AL LG; SV Fort -1, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 6, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb -1, Jump -1, Spot +0, Swim +0. *Note:* Because they are merely children, Renadra and Brenor receive only 4 skill points (bonus skill points for being human) and no feats.

Event 9. The Hero

Two different situations might trigger this event. First, if the PCs can't find the catacombs and are frustrated, use this encounter to drop them a solid hint. Second, if the PCs return from the catacombs before they've faced the devourer (area **U33**), use this encounter to raise the stakes somewhat.

Renadra Wrenbow finds the heroes at the Double Bolt Inn (or wherever they happen to be staying in the town). Her face is streaked with tears as she flies into the arms of whichever hero she most adores or admires. Through tears and blubbering, Renadra explains that her little brother, Brenor, has wandered off to fight the monsters. Before she continues, Renadra makes the character cross his or her heart and swear not to tell her parents. Eventually, she spills everything she knows:

Where has your brother gone? *"To the old Uhlstan farm."*

Why did Brenor go to the Uhlstan farm? *"Some other boys say it's haunted by the ghost of Tamara Uhlstan."*

Who is Tamara Uhlstan? *"A young girl who died. She fell down a well. Her Ladyship, Andress, tried to bring her back to life but couldn't."*

Who lives on the Uhlstan farm now? *"A man and a woman. I don't know their names, but I think they're married. They don't have any kids or animals. I see them sometimes at the temple speaking with Her Ladyship before services. They moved in a couple months after the Uhlstans left town."*

What makes you think monsters live on the Uhlstan farm? *"Brenor said he heard growls coming from the barn. I told him to stay away from that place because it's haunted, but he said he wasn't afraid of them. He's taken daddy's short sword and gone to slay the monsters. He thinks he's a hero like you!"*

Development: Brenor, brave little man that he is, has decided to emulate the heroes by vanquishing the "monsters" at the Uhlstan farm with his wooden shield and his father's short sword. By the time the PCs reach the Uhlstan barn, Brenor has been captured by the orcs hiding there. If the PCs head to the farmstead immediately, they arrive before Vochnar can order one of his orcs to take the boy to Sharloc (see area **U13**). If the PCs dawdle, Brenor is dragged down into the catacombs and left to the mercy of the vile acolyte of Loviatar.

Event 10. The Claws

The instant she regards the PCs as more than a nuisance, Andress attempts to alert Harular (area **U7**) using one of her acolytes or her cat familiar.

Creatures (EL 10+): Following Andress's instructions, Harular sends his brigands to eliminate the PCs. This force includes Sestra and Lyrr (see area **T1m**), Ghosgor (area **U3**), Glaster (area **U4**), Olipur (area **U7**), and all six warriors from area **U3**. Meanwhile, Harular escorts Andress to her secret shrine (area **U40**).

Tactics: Harular's task force exits the catacombs via the Double Bolt Inn or the Uhlstan farm, whichever is more practical or convenient. If they emerge via the Uhlstan barn, Vochnar and his orcs join the group (see area **T2c**).

The brigands employ straightforward tactics, counting on their superior numbers to overwhelm the heroes. If two or more "name" NPCs fall in battle, the survivors change their tactics slightly, concentrating their attacks on spellcasters, using flanking maneuvers, and aiding one another (see page 135 of the *Player's Handbook* for details on the Aid Another rule).

Development: If Andress suspects that the PCs know her true guise and plan to confront her at the Temple of Ilmater, she descends into the catacombs, heads to area **U7**, and instructs Harular to escort her safely to the hidden shrine of Loviatar (area **U40**) while his henchmen distract and slay the heroes.

Keyed Encounters (Areas U1–U40)

The following encounters detail the catacombs underneath the town of Twilight Hollow. This section is divided into four subsections: Beneath the Double Bolt Inn (areas **U1-U7**), Beneath the Uhlstan Farm (areas **U8-U14**), Beneath the Temple of Ilmater (areas **U15-U23**), and The House of Torment (areas **U24-U40**).

Once Andress realizes that the heroes are in the catacombs, and assuming she is still alive and free, she instructs Harular and his brigands to escort her to the secret shrine of Loviatar (area **U40**). She then commands Harular and his minions to find and destroy the heroes.

Unless otherwise noted, all ceilings in the catacombs are 10 feet high and 10 feet wide. Corridors are unlit, and chambers are illuminated by 1d4 torches in sconces. Doors are usually unlocked and made of wood, with iron hinges and handles. The doors in the House of Torment are unusual in various respects, as noted in that section.

Good Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Break (DC 18).

Various underground streams wend through the catacombs below Twilight Hollow. These streams vary in depth (1d10+5 feet at any given point) and generally flow from west to east, north to south. PCs attempting to move against the current must succeed at a Swim check (DC 10) or be carried 1d6 × 5 feet downstream. The flat bridges that span these streams are fashioned from wooden planks tied together with rope. Each bridge is 5 feet wide and can support up to 650 pounds. The bridges are not fixed to the floor and have statistics similar to the standard doors (see above).

Beneath the Double Bolt Inn (Areas U1-U7)

The half-dragon brigand Harular and his band, Harular's Claws, control this section of the catacombs.

U1. Deep Cellar. This cave is unlit. A fixed wooden ladder climbs a 30-foot-high shaft leading to the cellar of the Double Bolt Inn. (Sestra has sabotaged the ladder; see area **T1m** for details.)

This room (along with area **U2**) was part of a secret cellar used by the inn's previous proprietor. PCs who search the room find a few splinters of wood (the remains of shattered crates), some stains, and rat droppings. It is otherwise empty.

U2. Food Storage.

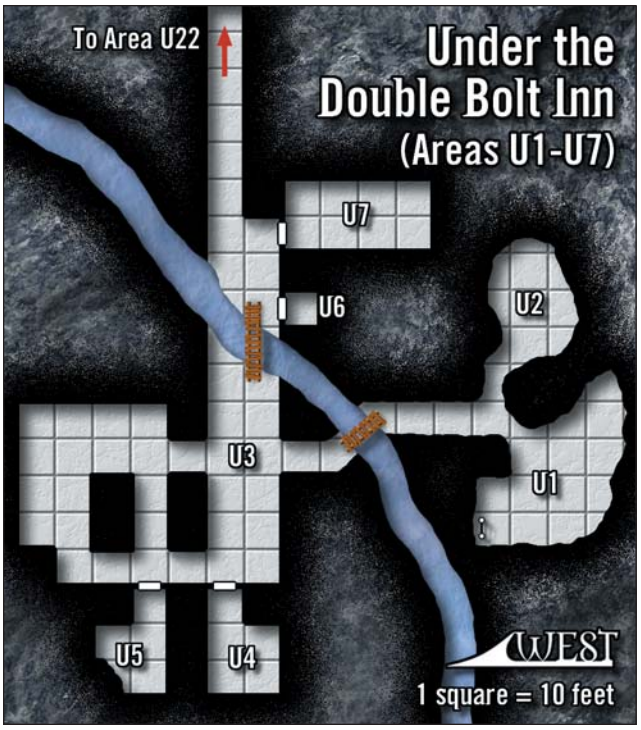
Eleven casks and fourteen boxes are stacked in the middle of this oval room. A hooded lantern sits atop the highest cask, and an iron crowbar leans against the nearest box. A few harmless rats scurry about.

This room contains the brigands' food supplies. The casks hold cheap ale, while the boxes hold bread, cheese, dried meat, and assorted vegetables.

Development: Attempts to poison the brigands' food supply could be thwarted by Glaster (area **U4**), who habitually casts *detect poison* cantrips on the supplies before they're portioned out. If he detects poison, Glaster immediately suspects that Ghosgor, Lyrr, or Sestra is responsible and reports his suspicions to Harular. The brigand leader takes no hasty actions, instead ordering Glaster to keep a close eye on everyone (which the sorcerer does anyway).

U3. Harular's Hall. If the PCs approach with light sources or don't take measures to move silently, the guards in this area are alerted. (See **Creatures** below.)

Torches spaced at regular intervals illuminate this 20-foot-wide hall. At the north end, a bridge of planks spans a 10-foot-wide stream, its water line a couple feet below floor level. Several doors and passages lead from the hall.



An L-shaped room to the west holds eight bedrolls, a table comprised of two barrels with planks laid across them, and eight wooden chairs.

Creatures (EL 7): Three brigands (1st-level human warriors) stand watch in the 20-foot-wide hall. One brigand stands on the north side of the bridge; the other guards stand due west of the passage leading to area **U1**.

The L-shaped room to the west is inhabited by five additional members of Harular's Claws: Ghosgor (a disgraced aristocrat who fell in with Harular), three more 1st-level warriors, and either Sestra or Lyrr (see area **T1m** for statistics). If Sestra is standing guard in area **T1m**, Lyrr is here (and vice versa). If these brigands have not been alerted to the PCs, it takes them 2 rounds to grab their gear and join combat in the main hall.

Ghosgor is a muscular man in his mid-twenties with dark, curly hair, a scruffy beard, and a neat scar over his left eye. Ghosgor's family was accused of treason, and all of their holdings were seized. After killing a royal guardswoman and stealing her weapons, Ghosgor dropped his family name and fled into the woods near Twilight Hollow. There he ran afoul of Harular, challenging the half-dragon for control of the brigands. Harular defeated him in combat but allowed Ghosgor to save face by agreeing to join Harular's Claws. Ghosgor still hopes to lead the brigands someday, but for now he's content to live life in the shadows.

Ghosgor, Male Human Ari2/Ftr5: CR 6; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 2d8+2 (Ari) plus 5d10+5 (Ftr); hp 47; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.); AC 19 (touch 11, flat-footed 18); Atk +10 melee (1d8+4/crit 19-20, *+1 long-sword)* or +9 melee (1d3+3 subdual, punch); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 13.

Skills: Appraise +5, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +4, Innuendo +1, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Listen +3, Read Lips +3, Ride +10, Spot +3, Swim +11. *Feats:* Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mounted Combat, Trample.

Possessions: Banded mail, large steel shield, *+1 longsword, +2 cloak of resistance* (already factored into saves above), sack containing 132 gp and eight bloodstones (50 gp each).

Brigands, Male Human War1 (6): hp 5 each; see area **T5c** for statistics and equipment.

Tactics: Ghosgor might try to disarm an opponent using the Improved Disarm feat. He flees or surrenders if reduced to 20 or fewer hit points and has no compunctions about betraying Harular, Andress, and anyone else to save himself.

Development: If battle erupts here, the denizens of areas **U4**, **U5**, and **U7** grab their gear and investigate. Dyrch, Harular, and Olipur appear in 2 rounds, Glaster in 6 rounds.

U4. Glaster's Room.

Someone has taken great pains to make this dim chamber comfortable. Furnishings include a cot with a quilt, an ornately carved table with an alchemist's lab and a bowl of dried fruit on it, a standing wood-framed screen emblazoned with stylized blackbirds, and a tapestry depicting a female centaur brandishing a magic staff. A wolf fur cloak hangs on the back of the door.

Creature (EL 5): Harular's advisor, Glaster, dwells here. A slender, beady-eyed man who scowls a lot, Glaster prefers tight-fitting tunics and breeches to billowy robes. Harular saved him from an ogre's cooking pot, and Glaster has repaid the half-dragon with loyalty. Glaster has no real friends among the brigands and fears that Ghosgor, Sestra, or someone else might try to kill Harular, take control of the band, and expel him. The sorcerer likes to eavesdrop on other brigands' conversations, determined to catch wind of some treacherous plot.

Glaster, Male Human Sor5: CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 5d4; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 11, flat-footed 11); Atk +1 melee (1d8-1/crit ×3, shortspear) or +3 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills: Alchemy +6, Concentration +8, Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Move Silently +4, Spellcraft +6. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Scribe Scroll.

Spells Known (6/7/5, save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, detect poison, ghost sound, mending, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*magic missile, magic weapon, shield, spider climb, true strike;* 2nd—*endurance, invisibility, see invisibility*.

Possessions: +1 bracers of armor, shortspear, light crossbow with 12 bolts, *wand of sleep* (23 charges), *potion of cat's grace, potion of invisibility, potion of spider climb,* scroll of *expeditious retreat*.

Tactics: Before entering battle, Glaster casts *magic weapon* on his crossbow, followed by *endurance*, *shield*, and *invisibility* on himself. He then drinks his *potion of cat's grace*. He prefers to cast spells or fire crossbow bolts from a safe distance. If he takes any damage, he flees with the aid of a *potion of invisibility* or *expeditious retreat* scroll.

If the PCs overwhelm the forces in area **U3** before he has time to cast his preparatory spells, Glaster remains invisible in this room until afforded a chance to escape.

Treasure: The alchemist's lab is worth 500 gp, the wood-framed screen and tapestry are each worth 75 gp intact, and the wolf fur cloak hanging on the door is worth 30 gp.

U5. Dyrch's Room.

The southwest corner of this room has collapsed into a heap of rubble. A wooden mannequin draped in black cloth stands against the wall opposite the entrance. The mannequin's wooden head is painted with black eyes and pierced with black needles and hooks. In its hands it clutches a portable wooden shrine containing a small bowl and incense burner. An unremarkable cot rests in the northwest corner.

The mannequin is a representation of Loviatar assembled by the occupant of this room—an acolyte named Dyrch.

Creature (EL 2): Andress sent Dyrch to keep an eye on Harular's Claws and make sure the brigands didn't do anything to jeopardize her plan to build a temple of Loviatar under the village. The repugnant, sycophantic acolyte was easily cowed by the half-dragon and his thugs; thus, Dyrch spends most of his time inflicting small bodily cuts and wounds on himself and dripping the blood in his small shrine's sacrificial bowl.

Dyrch has numerous birth defects, including a hunched back, a pronounced jaw, and three fingers on his left hand. He teeth are horribly crooked, and his face, arms, and legs are covered with small scars (some old and others fresh). He both fears and respects Andress.

Dyrch, Male Human Clr2 (Loviatar): CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 2d8+7 (includes Toughness feat); hp 18; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 9, flat-footed 12); Atk +2 melee (1d8+1 plus poison, scourge or 1d4+1/crit 19-20 plus poison, dagger); SA rebuke undead 1/day; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref -1, Will +5; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 7.

Skills: Concentration +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (religion) +3, Spellcraft +3. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (scourge), Toughness.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1, base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*command, cure light wounds, protection from good*†.

†Domain spell. *Domains*: Evil (casts evil spells at +1 caster level), Suffering (pain touch 1/day; see page 65 of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* for details).

Possessions: Red ceremonial robe with hood, scourge, dagger, vial of blue whinnis poison (see page 80 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details), holy symbol of Loviatar.

U6. Torch Storage. The far wall of this 10-foot by 10-foot room is lined with shelves. The brigands and clerics of Loviatar keep 300 torches and two boxes of tindertwigs (50 tindertwigs per box) here.

Development: Dyrch (area **U5**) and Sharloc (area **U13**) are responsible for replenishing burnt-out torches in the catacombs. They leave this room several times each day with small bundles of torches and tindertwigs.

U7. Harular's Quarters.

This 40-foot-deep room is divided into two 20-foot-square areas by a tattered brown curtain. The closer area is empty save for some bones, puddles of water, and a pair of leather saddles with saddlebags. Behind the curtain you can discern a pair of bedrolls against the far wall.

The cots belong to Harular and Olipur (see **Creatures** for details). PCs who peer beyond the curtain that divides the room also see a pair of wooden chests (containing the **Treasure**) fitted with iron clasps and leather straps that allow them to be transported by mounts.

The saddles are designed to fit a pair of giant lizards that Harular has befriended with *animal friendship* spells. These creatures typically sleep in the western half of the room.

Creatures (EL 11): Harular, the offspring of a *polymorphed* green dragon and a demented halfling sorcerer, rules a motley band of brigands known as Harular's Claws. He has used his knowledge of the surrounding wilderness to avoid capture, and he considers Andress Nagheson a powerful ally.

Harular looks like a halfling with green scales, hornlets jutting from his brow and chin, and a spiky crest instead of hair. His hands resemble a dragon's claws, and his oversized jaws are lined with sharp yellow teeth.

Harular is joined by his most trusted lieutenant—a gnome rogue named Olipur—and two giant lizard animal companions.

Harular, Male Half-halfling/Half-dragon (Green) Rgr6: CR 8; Small Dragon (3 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 6d12+12; hp 50; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21 (touch 14, flat-footed 19) or 25 (touch 18, flat-footed 23) or 26 (touch 19, flat-footed 24); Atk +11 melee (1d3+5, 2 claws), +6 melee (1d4+2, bite) or +9/+4 melee (1d6+5/crit 17-20, *+1 keen shortsword*), +9 melee (1d4+2/crit 19-20, *+1 dagger*), +6 melee (1d4+2, bite) or +9/+4 ranged (1d6+5/crit ×3, mighty composite shortbow with *+1 arrows*); SA breath weapon, favored enemies (1st—fey, 2nd—giants), two-weapon fighting; SQ Track; low-light vision; darkvision 60 ft.; immune to sleep, paralysis, and acid; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 16.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of corrosive gas (30 feet long): 6d6 points of damage; Reflex saving throw (DC 17) for half damage.

Skills: Animal Empathy +7, Climb +8, Concentration +7, Handle Animal +7, Heal +4, Hide +7, Intuit Direction +2, Listen +3, Ride +4, Spot +3, Swim +8, Wilderness Lore +7. *Feats:* Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track.

Spells Prepared (2, base save DC = 10 + spell level): 1st—*animal friendship, pass without trace.*

Possessions: +2 leather armor, +1 ring of protection, +1 keen short sword, +1 dagger, mighty composite shortbow [+4] with 22 *+1 arrows, boots of speed,* rust-colored *bag of tricks, potion of cat's grace, potion of resist elements (fire),* ivory horn (15 gp), key to wooden chest (see **Treasure** below).

Olipur has long, braided red hair and twinkling blue eyes. A tiny birthmark on his forehead vaguely resembles a broken four-pointed star. His wiry frame belies impressive strength.

Olipur Shatterstar, Male Gnome Rog4: CR 4; Small Humanoid (3 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 4d6; hp 18; Init +8; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 14, flat-footed 16); Atk +6 melee (1d6+2/crit 19-20, masterwork short sword) or +7 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 9.

Skills: Balance +9, Climb +7, Disable Device +6, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +9, Pick Pocket +9, Search +6, Tumble +11, Use Magic Device +6. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes.

Possessions: Leather armor, masterwork short sword, light crossbow with 20 bolts, *dust of disappearance* (in pouch), sack of 152 gp and 18 sp, key to wooden chest (see **Treasure**).

Giant Lizards (2): hp 22 each; *Monster Manual* 198.

Tactics: Harular activates his *boots of speed.* He then sends his giant lizard companions into battle while he hangs back and fires arrows. If one of his lizards is slain, he summons another animal using his *bag of tricks.* Before entering melee, Harular drinks his *potion of cat's grace* to improve his AC. He fights with his magic *short sword, dagger,* and his bite.

Olipur uses his *dust of disappearance* to render himself unseen and stays close to Harular, waiting for a chance to flank (and sneak attack) anyone who enters melee with the half-dragon ranger. Note that the dust thwarts *see invisibility* (but not *true seeing*) spells.

Treasure: The wooden chests are locked, and Harular and Olipur each carries a key for his own chest. Harular's chest contains a neatly folded, embroidered green cloak (45 gp) that he dons when trying to keep a low profile. Beneath the cloak lies a sack of 360 pp and an ebony box with gem inlays (225 gp) containing six platinum bracelets (150 gp each). Olipur's chest contains a set of masterwork thieves' tools and a pair of collapsible wooden stilts. The stilts allow a Small humanoid who makes a successful Balance check (DC 10) to increase his base speed by 10 feet. A new Balance check is required each round. The stilts can be sold for 50 gp to an interested buyer.

Beneath the Uhlstan Farm (Areas U8-U14)

Characters who descend the well shaft under the Uhlstan barn (area **T1c**) and open the secret door at the bottom find themselves in a particularly dank corner of the catacombs occupied by a cleric of Loviatar and orcs loyal to Harular's Claws.

U8. Sliding Blocks. This 10-foot-square section of floor contains a pressure plate that activates the **Trap**. The pressure plate can be found by a rogue making a successful Search check (DC 24).

Pulling one of two levers hidden in the nearby walls (marked ✕ on the map) disarms the trap and allows safe passage through the corridor. The levers can be detected with a successful Search check (DC 15). The hidden levers are treated as secret doors for purposes of elves noticing them.

Trap (EL 5): Stepping on the hidden pressure plate causes a pair of 10-foot by 10-foot by 10-foot stone blocks to roll out from niches to the north and south. The south block rolls 10 feet, blocking the passage to area **U9**. The north block rolls southward until it hits the south block, crushing everything in its path.

PCs caught between the two blocks must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 20). Those who succeed have the choice of leaping into the western corridor (toward the well shaft) or the eastern corridor (toward area **U9**). Those who fail take 10d6 points of damage and are pinned between the blocks.

Once the blocks have stopped rolling, they can be slid back into their niches with successful Strength checks (DC 28). Stone rollers make them relatively easy to move, given their weight.

Sliding Blocks: CR 5; 10d6 points of damage; Reflex save (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 24 for stone blocks or pressure plate, 15 for hidden levers); Disable Device (DC 25).

U9. Weakened Bridge. An artery of the underground stream cuts across the corridor at this point, its surface 2 feet below floor level. This bridge is trapped.

Trap (EL 1): Two of the wooden planks in the middle of this bridge have been weakened deliberately. Rogues who inspect the bridge have a chance to notice fine saw marks that cause the planks to break (DC 20 Search check).

The stream is 8 feet deep at this point. The first PC who crosses the bridge without taking care to avoid certain planks falls through with a loud splash. A character in light or no armor is carried downstream 20 feet per round; a character in medium armor is carried 10 feet per round; a character in heavy armor sinks to the bottom and is not carried off by the current.

Weakened Bridge: CR 1; no damage, but drowning rules apply (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 85); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (n/a).

Development: The sound of someone falling in the water brings the guards from area **U10** and four of the orcs from area **U11**, who shoot arrows or hurl javelins at PCs on the far side of stream. Meanwhile, the four remaining orcs in area **U11** move to the western edge of that room and hurl javelins at any PC carried downstream by the current.

U10. Sentries. This room contains a pair of bedrolls, a table, and two chairs. A worn deck of cards and two stacks of copper coins (35 cp total) can be found on the table.

Creatures (EL 4): Two brigands, Embrul and Thulk, stand guard here. They occasionally patrol the catacombs but spend most of their day sharing tales of debauchery. If captured, Embrul and Thulk can be coaxed into revealing the names and locations of various members of Harular's Claws (DC 15 Bluff or Intimidate check), but they lie about Harular (they refer to him as a powerful human wizard matching Glaster's description).

Embrul and Thulk know that Harular's Claws have joined forces with the clerics of Loviatar, who intend to enslave the village once their temple lures a sufficient number of devotees. They know that the temple is currently run by a sadistic dwarf named Bhell, who answers only to a figure that they've heard referred to as "the Painmistress" (by Harular). They have seen her once, but she was wearing red robes and a mask.

Embrul and Thulk, Male Human War3: CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 3d8+6 (includes Toughness feat); hp 24 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 10, flat-footed 16); Atk +6 melee (1d12+2/crit ×3, greataxe with Weapon Focus feat) or +3 ranged (1d8/crit ×3, longbow); AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 7, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +2, Listen +2 (includes Alertness feat), Spot +1 (includes Alertness feat), Swim +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Toughness.

Possessions: Banded mail, greataxe, longbow with 20 arrows, 4d6 gp and 3d6 sp in pouch.

U11. Gruumsh's Everwatching Eye. This room is unlit.

> An unpleasant smell emanates from this room. Eight moth-eaten bedrolls litter the floor, and drawn with black charcoal on the south wall is a huge, crudely rendered eye. West of the eye, the floor drops away and running water can be heard.

The charcoal Eye of Gruumsh watches over the denizens of this room and glares at all non-orcs who deign to enter. To the west, the floor drops 5 feet to the surface of a 10-foot-wide, 8-foot-deep underground stream.

Creatures (EL 7): Eight orcs live here. They are loyal only to Vochnar (area **T1c**) and attack PCs on sight. They hate elves above all else.

Orcs (8): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 146. Each orc carries a greataxe, two javelins, and 5d8 cp.

U12. Prison. This entire area is unlit, although torchlight spills out from area **U13**.

> This hall holds a number of deep niches. Set into the floor of each niche is a 5-foot-diameter, rusty iron grate. Sobs and whispers can be heard from beneath two of them.

Villagers and visitors who run afoul of Andress end up here. Below each grate is an 8-foot-deep, 5-foot-diameter cylindrical cell filled with 2 feet of stagnant, foul-smelling water.

The iron grates are sealed shut with chains and padlocks, the keys to which are in Sharloc's possession (see area **U13**). Long iron spikes welded to the underside of each grate discourage prisoners from reaching up through the gaps.

Padlocked Iron Chains: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 10 (chains), 15 (padlock); Break (DC 26); Open Lock (DC 25).

Creatures (EL —): Only two of the six cells are occupied. (If he was captured in Event 9, Brenor is also found here.)

The first prisoner is a homeless man named Yharune (male human Com1; hp 3) who crept inside the Temple of Ilmater one night, hoping to sleep on a pew. He overheard Andress speaking with one of her underlings (Dyrch) about Harular's Claws. Unfortunately, Andress spotted Yharune, immobilized him with a *hold person* spell, and had him taken to the catacombs.

The second prisoner is madman and worshiper of Loviatar named Drewel (male human Com1; hp 4) who came to Andress seeking spiritual enlightenment; this is his "reward."

Yharune just wants to escape the catacombs and flee the village. Drewel likes to experience pain and tries to provoke his liberators into harming him (by hitting and biting them).

Development: Captured characters who defy Andress are stripped of their gear (which is stored in area **U13**) and thrown into these cells until she decides their fate. Attempts to break the chains or open the padlocks from within a cell suffer a -8 circumstance penalty.

Anything more than a whisper or sob in this area brings the jailer, Sharloc (see below).

U13. Sharloc's Room.

This octagonal chamber might have served some special purpose in the past. Discolorations on the floor suggest the presence of heavy furniture, and circles of dried wax allude to the presence of candleholders. Iron rungs on the walls might have once supported tapestries long since removed. Now the room holds a bed fashioned from the bones of some large creature. At the foot of the bed sits a hefty, claw-footed copper urn with black spikes.

The bone bed was crafted by the chamber's occupant from the bones of a destrachan. The copper urn with clawed feet weighs 30 pounds and is actually an animated object.

Creatures (EL 7): The sadistic and merciless jailer, Sharloc, is one of Andress's most gifted acolytes. Although he is fairly weak, he commands a legion of ten *desecrated* orc skeletons created by the *cauldron of desecration* in area **U33**.

Sharloc also commands the animated copper urn, which is filled to the brim with flesh-eating salt acid. Once per round, as a free action, the urn can "belch" forth a 5-foot by 5-foot cloud, dealing 2d4 points of acid damage on the first round and 2d4 points of damage on the second round. A successful Reflex saving throw (DC 12) halves the damage. The urn contains enough salt acid to create a dozen clouds. If anyone other than a cleric of Loviatar touches the urn, it animates and attacks.

Sharloc, Male Human Clr2 (Loviatar): hp 20; other statistics identical to Dyrch (area **U5**).

Animated Copper Urn (1): CR 2; Medium-size Construct; HD 2d10; hp 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 10, flat-footed 14); Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, slam); SA acid cloud (see above); SQ construct, hardness 8; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

***Desecrated* Orc Skeletons (10):** hp 8 each; *Monster Manual* 165. These skeletons get a +2 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. All Charisma checks to turn them suffer a -6 profane penalty.

U14. Hidden Pit. A carefully concealed pit trap awaits PCs at a bend in this corridor. PCs who detect the pit can avoid it by stepping over the southeast corner.

Trap (EL 3): Sixty or more pounds of weight applied to the pit's lid causes it to snap open. Any PCs standing on the pit at that time are dropped 15 feet into a swift, 6-foot-deep underground stream. PCs in light or no armor are pulled 20 feet downstream each round; PCs in medium armor are pulled 10 feet downstream each round; PCs in heavy armor sink to the bottom and are not carried away by the current.

The northeast and southwest walls of the underground stream directly under the pit trap are covered with 3-foot-diameter patches of brown mold. In addition to falling, PCs take 3d6 points of cold subdual damage from the fungus each round they remain within 5 feet of the mold.

Watery Pit with Brown Mold: CR 3; no falling damage, Reflex save (DC 15) negates; 3d6 points of cold subdual damage from brown mold (5-foot radius); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 21).

Beneath the Temple of Ilmater (Areas U15-U23)

This network of catacombs contains undead animated with the help of the *cauldron of desecration* in area **U33**. A few other denizens and traps also await unwanted intruders.

U15. Chained Cleric.

The vaulted ceiling of this huge chamber is supported by great arches that resemble cracked ribs. The southern half of the chamber gives way to a 20-foot-wide underground stream spanned by a rickety wooden bridge. A wooden ladder clings to the east wall, held in place by rusted bolts and rings. Several dark tunnels lead north. Hanging on the wall between two of these passages, suspended by a pair of rusting manacles, is an emaciated figure dressed in a stained white robe.

The northern tunnels are trapped at the points marked ✕ on the map. Andress's favorite prisoner is manacled to the north wall. Levetron, an aasimar cleric of Ilmater, visited the temple a month ago after learning of Shaunnra's death. (He and the paladin were friends.) Annoyed by his sanctimonious attitude and devotion to the god of suffering, Andress served Levetron wine laced with blue whinnis poison and ordered her minions to chain him in the dungeon (all for her amusement). Andress carries the key to Levetron's manacles.

Iron Manacles: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 10; Break (DC 26); Escape Artist (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 25).

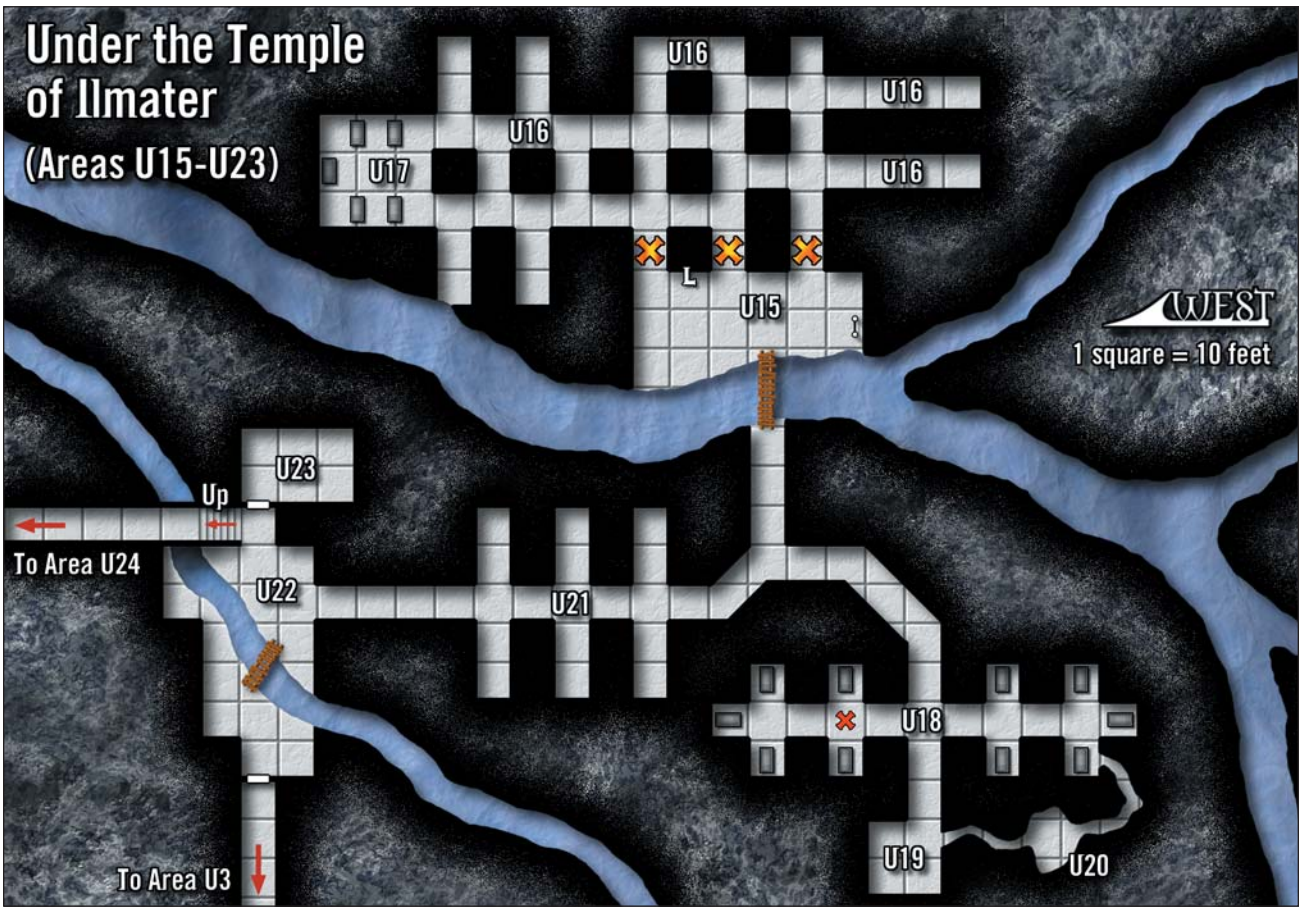
Creature (EL —): Andress has been "teaching" Levetron the meaning of pain. She routinely casts *inflict wounds* spells and *poison* spells (tempered with *delay poison* and *neutralize poison* spells) on him, and his body is covered with lacerations and bruises. She almost killed him once by accident when she didn't have a *cure wounds* spell left and he dropped below 0 hit points, but an initiate managed to stabilize Levetron in time to prevent his death. He is now but a pale shadow of his former self.

Levetron is a broken man, incapable of speaking to anyone until his Constitution is fully healed. If freed from the manacles, he falls into a trembling heap on the floor. If the heroes are rough with him or force him to walk, there is a 25% chance that he mistakes one of them for Andress and goes berserk, pounding the PC with his fists.

Levetron, Male Aasimar Clr5 (Ilmater): CR 5; Medium-size Outsider (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 5d8; hp 30 (3 currently); Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +3 melee (1d3 subdual, punch); SQ cast *light* 1/day (as Sor5); turn undead 10/day (includes Extra Turning feat); acid, cold, and electricity resistance 5; AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +10; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10 (2 currently), Int 13, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +4, Diplomacy +7, Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +6 (includes racial bonus), Spellcraft +5, Spot +6 (includes radial bonus). *Feats:* Extra Turning, Iron Will.

Traps (EL 2 per *glyph*): Andress has placed a fire *glyph of warding* in the entrance to each north tunnel. These *glyphs* are meant to discourage the gelatinous cubes in area **U16** from wandering into this room and feasting on Andress's favorite prisoner. So far, this has worked very well.



Fire *Glyphs of Warding* (3): CR 2; 5-foot radius; 4d8 points of fire damage; Reflex save (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 19).

Development: If fully healed, Levetron agrees to help the PCs destroy Andress and her evil followers. In time, he realizes that his suffering has brought him closer to Ilmater, and he decides to stay on as the new high cleric of the Temple of Ilmater in Twilight Hollow.

U16. Cubes & Catacombs. The walls in this dark maze are lined with narrow niches. At one time these niches contained bones, but Andress removed and *animated* them. The floors are free of detritus, thanks largely to the creatures that dwell here.

Creatures (EL 6): Three gelatinous cubes scour these tunnels. They instinctively shy away from area **U15**, having tripped more than one *glyph of warding*. As the cubes are constantly moving around, PCs who are not careful could find themselves trapped between them.

Gelatinous Cubes (3): hp 59, 55, 48; *Monster Manual* 145.

Treasure: The largest gelatinous cube has engulfed a pair of metal items: a *+1 holy light mace* and a masterwork breastplate. These belong to Levetron, the aasimar cleric chained in area **U15**. Levetron's other possessions (including his wooden holy symbol) were completely dissolved by the gelatinous cube.

U17. Violated Crypt. This room is unlit.

Five stone sarcophagi fill this room: two against the north wall, two against the south wall, and one near the middle of the west wall. All of their lids are askew.

Andress plundered these sarcophagi, animating the skeletons within. Nothing but dust remains.

U18. Crypts. This area is unlit.

The tunnel splits in four directions. The passages to the west and east are lined with deep, shadow-filled alcoves, each one hiding a stone sarcophagus.

The first PC who reaches the intersection should make a Spot check (DC 17). Success indicates the PC glimpses a shadowy figure slinking across the passage to the south dragging two tentaclelike appendages behind. Investigation reveals that the creature must have gone into the tunnel heading east from area **U19**.

The western hall of alcoves is trapped. All the sarcophagi here have been plundered, although PCs searching the westernmost crypt find the mechanism for the **Trap**.

The eastern hall of alcoves is safe, but like the other crypts, these sarcophagi have been plundered. A 4-foot-diameter, rough tunnel leads from the southeast alcove to area **U20**.

Trap (EL 5): A carefully concealed 10-foot by 10-foot pressure plate is built into the floor at the point marked ✕ on the map. Setting foot on the floorplate causes three spring-loaded shortspears to shoot forth from holes in the western sarcophagus, striking the lead PC. A separate attack roll should be made for each spear. Each spear is coated with greenblood oil.

Poisoned Shortspear Trap: CR 5; 100-foot range; +12 ranged (1d8/crit ×3 plus poison, 3 spears); greenblood oil (Injury DC 13; initial damage 1 Con, secondary damage 1d2 Con); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

U19. Violated Crypt. This room is unlit.

The passage opens into a 20-foot square crypt dominated by a stone sarcophagus placed atop a rectangular stone bier. Its cast-off lid lies shattered on the floor, and the sides of the sarcophagus are covered with scratches, as if something were clawing at it. A 4-foot-diameter, roughly hewn tunnel bores deep into the east wall near the entrance.

Breaking into the sarcophagus to retrieve the bones within, Andress was taken aback when a wraith rose from the crypt and tried to attack her. Fortunately for the evil cleric, she was able to command the creature and compel it to serve her as a guardian (see area **U26**).

The scratch marks on the sarcophagus are crudely scrawled words written in Undercommon. A successful Decipher Script check (DC 15) is required to read the poor handwriting, even if PCs can normally understand the language. Three words are repeated over and over: "hungry," "lonely," and "mine." These scrawls were made by the creature that lairs in area **U20**.

PCs who inspect the shattered sarcophagus lid see that it bears several empty indentations (gem fittings) along its rim.

Treasure: PCs who search the inside of the sarcophagus and succeed at a Search check (DC 20) find a secret compartment containing a gold box inlaid with six chrysoberyls (800 gp) containing *incense of meditation* and a malachite dagger (70 gp).

U20. Choker Lair. The creature that lairs here is alert and cannot be surprised unless the PCs douse their light sources and move silently. The rough-hewn tunnels leading to this area are 4 feet tall and descend at a 20-degree angle, emerging in the middle of a 12-foot-high oval cave. Bones cover the floor of the cave, which lies 4 feet below the tunnel mouths.

Creature (EL 4): Clinging to the ceiling is the oldest living denizen of the catacombs: a hungry and lonely choker. The creature despises all other forms of life and craves the company of others of its kind. It is also tired of feasting on rats and other small vermin.

PCs who can communicate with the creature can bribe it with food or treasure. It knows the catacombs under the temple but has not been beyond area **U22**. It has also encountered Andress, who scared it away with her "foul magic."

Advanced Choker (1): CR 2*; Small Aberration; HD 6d8+6; hp 44; Init +4; Spd 20 ft., climb 10 ft.; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 16); Atk +7 melee (1d3+3, 2 tentacle slaps); Reach 10 ft.; SA free partial action, improved grab, constrict 1d3+3; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +16, Hide +8, Move Silently +9. *Feat:* Improved Initiative.

***Ad Hoc XP:** Due to the choker's increased Hit Dice, you should double the XP award for overcoming it (whether the PCs slay or successfully bribe it).

Treasure: The choker keeps a small collection of 12 gems (100 gp each) in a niche, which the PCs can locate with a successful Search check (DC 20). These gems were pried out of the sarcopagus lid in area **U19**.

U21. Hall of Bones. This corridor is lined with six 20-foot-deep alcoves. When she is not in the catacombs, Andress keeps a force of 18 animated humanoid skeletons in these alcoves (three per alcove). Most of the skeletons are human or orc.

When Andress visits the temple of Loviatar or flees into the catacombs, she brings these skeletons with her for protection. In the House of Torment they stand in area **U35**, guarding the secret doors leading to Andress's shrine (area **U40**). If the skeletons are destroyed there, they are not encountered here.

Creatures (EL 8): These skeletons, all of which were created in the *cauldron of desecration* (area **U33**), stand with swords ready against the west wall of each alcove, staring into oblivion. They attack only when commanded by Andress (or another evil cleric) or when they are attacked.

***Desecrated* Humanoid Skeletons (18):** hp 8 each; Atk +2 melee (1d8+2/crit 19-20, longsword) or +2 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws); *Monster Manual* 165. These skeletons receive a +2 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Charisma checks to turn them suffer a -6 profane penalty.

U22. Junction Room.

A 10-foot-wide stream cuts diagonally across this oddly shaped room. The floor drops about 1 foot to the water's surface, and a wooden bridge spans the stream near the middle of the room. A staircase to the north rises 10 feet and connects to a tunnel leading west.

Development: PCs who make noise in this area attract the attention of the guards in area **U23**. These guards take 1 round to gather their weapons before investigating any disturbance.

U23. Guard Room.

This dank room contains four bedrolls, a table with four chairs, and a wooden stand supporting a crude, straw-stuffed mannequin with two daggers embedded in its chest and another dagger stuck in its head.

Creatures (EL 7): Three brigands and their temperamental pet—a dire wolverine—sleep here. The brigands patrol the catacombs from time to time but spend most of their day arm wrestling or throwing daggers at the straw-stuffed mannequin. If captured, they can be coaxed into revealing the names and locations of the various members of Harular's Claws (DC 15 Bluff or Intimidate check), but they lie about Harular himself (they claim that he was slain by Ghosgor, who has usurped control of the organization).

These brigands know that their leader is allied with the clerics of Loviatar, who intend to enslave the village once their temple lures a sufficient number of devotees. They know that the temple is run by a woman called "the Painmistress." They have seen this woman, dressed in red robes and a mask, in the company of their half-dragon leader.

Ekariol, Myrcolar, and Norvan, Male Human War3: hp 24 each; see area **U10** for complete statistics and equipment.

Dire Wolverine (1): hp 45; *Monster Manual* 57.

Tactics: The brigands let the dire wolverine tear into the most adversarial PC. If the dire wolverine is slain or turned against them, the brigands flee south toward area **U3**, hoping to alert the rest of Harular's Claws. If necessary, one of them kicks the wooden bridge into the stream to thwart pursuit. If two brigands are taken down, the third surrenders.

The House of Torment (Areas U24-U40)

Herein lies the hidden shrine to Loviatar as well as the greater temple where Andress plans to teach new followers the ways of the pain goddess. Herein the PCs will also find the *cauldron of desecration*, which Andress and the devourer use to animate the corpses of fallen adversaries.

While Andress torments the people of Twilight Hollow from the Temple of Ilmater (area **T5**), she leaves the day-to-day operations of the House of Torment to her most trusted subordinate, a vile half-elf named Bhell the Painmonger. Bhell is the dread architect of the House of Torment, specially chosen for the task by the pain goddess herself. All of the House's special features—its walls, doors, and more horrible accoutrements—were lovingly crafted by Bhell with the aid of magic and plain, simple ingenuity.

Walls: Walls throughout the House of Torment are painted with black symbols of pain (scourges, claws, barbs, spikes, teeth, flames, and so forth) as well as scenes of torture intended to repulse creatures of nonevil alignment. There are no magical effects associated with these horrible motifs; they exist solely to comfort the servants of Loviatar and upset others.

Biting Doors: Bhell fashioned all of the doors in the House of Torment from iron and stained them blood red. Each door is locked, and there is no keyhole. The doorknob is tucked inside a gaping demon's maw crafted from iron and held on by *sovereign glue*. To unlock and thereby open a door, one must turn the knob and allow the demonic face to bite one's hand or wrist. The bite deals 1 point of damage, and only after tasting blood will the door open. (One can try to avoid the damage with a successful DC 15 Reflex save, but the door refuses to open until it has tasted fresh blood.)

Bloodless creatures (including undead and constructs) cannot unlock the Biting Doors. Many of the House of Torment's living denizens have slightly reduced hit points, which can be attributed to the opening of these nasty portals.

Removing the demon face with *universal solvent* removes the threat of being bitten but does not unlock the door. A successful Open Locks roll allows one to open a door, but not until the demon face is removed or disabled with a successful Disable Device check. A *knock* spell works normally and allows safe passage through the iron portal. All doors have springs to close them automatically, although they can be held open.

Iron Biting Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; deals 1 point of damage; Reflex save (DC 15) negates; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25 for demon face).

Secret Doors: These stone portals are obscured by hideous murals and symbols and are more difficult to spot than normal secret doors. They are usually opened by depressing a hidden stone or panel on the nearby wall (requiring a DC 25 Search check to find). Secret doors pivot on a central vertical axis.

Secret Stone Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 8; hp 30; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 23); Search (DC 20 for door, 25 for hidden panel/stone).

Illumination: Areas **U26-U40** are lit by *continual flame* spells cast atop 5-foot-tall iron candlesticks. The candlesticks are bolted to the floor and resemble long, barbed rods with open, iron claws at the top. The claws appear to be holding the flames. Breaking or removing a candlestick requires a successful Strength check.

Barbed Iron Candlesticks: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30; Break (DC 24); Dispel (DC 16 for the *continual flame*).

U24. Disturbing Signs. Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs make their way down either of these two halls:

> Black symbols begin appearing on the walls, becoming more proliferate the farther you travel. Wicked scourges, crooked talons, screaming faces, barbed daggers, and black flames are but a prelude to more sadistic imagery. You begin to see murals depicting elaborate scenes of torture. Even more disturbing is an overwhelming sense that these murals were painstakingly crafted by someone who knows the true meaning of pain.

PCs who make a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20) can spot clues suggesting that these symbols and murals were painted by a worshiper of Loviatar. Several scenes show the torturers wearing ceremonial robes or brandishing known symbols and favored weapons of the goddess.

U25. Bhell's Forge. Flickering, orange light spills out of this chamber into the adjacent hall. Read or paraphrase the boxed text below as the PCs peer into the room:

> This room is illuminated by a crackling fire that plays within a semicircular firepit built against the south wall. An iron anvil sits on the floor before the firepit. Along the west and north walls, a pair of stone tables seem to have risen naturally from the floor. They are covered with tools, iron shavings, and bits of twisted metal.

The fire is, in fact, a fire elemental summoned by Andress using a *lesser planar ally* spell. It is further described under

Creature below. The tables were created with *stone shape* spells. The iron anvil requires a DC 22 Strength check to move and conceals the **Treasure**. The tools are actually a set of masterwork artisan's tools (see *Player's Handbook*, page 110).

Creature (EL 5): The ill-tempered fire elemental has agreed to remain on the Prime Material Plane long enough for Bhell to finish his work in the House of Torment. The elemental does not get along well with anyone, Bhell in particular, but it admires the half-elf's handiwork.

The elemental cannot resist attacking anyone who tries to move the anvil or comes within striking distance. (It has 10-foot reach.) Most of the time, it is indistinguishable from a large fire; when it attacks, however, it "grows" two fiery arms and reveals a pair of flickering white eyes.

Large Fire Elemental (1): hp 60; *Monster Manual* 83.

Treasure: The anvil covers an open cubby-hole in the floor. Here Bhell has placed a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a *potion of protection from elements (fire)*, and 250 gp in a small, unlocked iron box emblazoned with a scowling elf visage.

U26. Maiden of Pain.

A barbed, iron-wrought candlestick rises from the middle of the floor, ending in a claw that clutches a small orange flame that illuminates the room. Black smoke issues from the dancing flame. The flickering light plays off of four steel masks that hang on the painted diagonal walls of this octagonal room. Each mask portrays a different face in excruciating pain. In an alcove to the south leans an 8-foot tall, 4-foot-wide metal lozenge resembling a coffin, its lid made of banded steel and hinged on one side.

The "black smoke" hovering above the *continual flame* is the **Creature**. PCs approaching within 10 feet who succeed at a Spot check (DC 12) realize its true nature.

Three of the steel masks are fixed to the walls with *sovereign glue;* the mask on the southeast wall hangs on a hidden hook and can be lifted off. Removing the mask causes the hook to rise an inch, deactivating the **Trap** (see below).

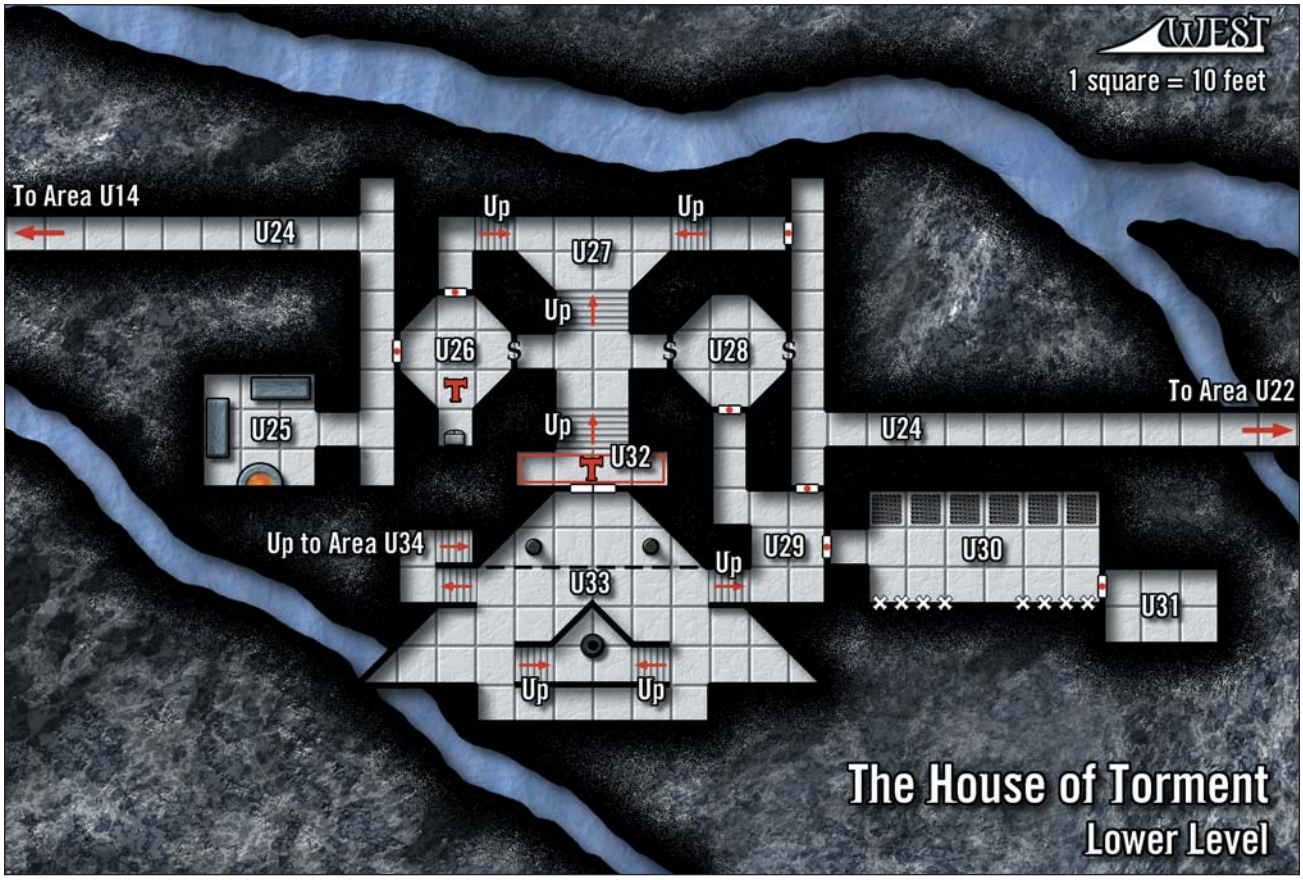
The south alcove contains an iron maiden—a coffin-shaped torture device. Its lid bares dozens of wicked spikes that impale anyone trapped inside. The iron maiden is part of the **Trap**.

Creature (EL 5): A wraith floats above the *continual flame,* waiting for the right moment to strike (see **Tactics**). The wraith was originally bound to a tomb under the Temple of Ilmater (see area **U19**), but Andress was able to command it to serve as a guardian in the House of Torment. Once it reveals itself, PCs can see that this creature resembles a woman whose features have been twisted by her horrible undead state.

Wraith (1): hp 26; *Monster Manual* 185.

Tactics: The wraith waits for someone to trigger the trap and become locked in the iron maiden. If this happens, it floats through the ceiling and walls to attack the helpless character within the torture device from the safety of the wall south of the maiden. A trapped PC is in mortal danger unless he manages to get free within a couple of rounds. If the characters don't trigger the trap, the wraith attacks whoever passes near.

Trap (EL 8): The 10-foot-square section of floor directly in front of the alcove is a pressure plate. Applying 100 pounds or more of weight causes the lid of the iron maiden to fling open. At the same time, the north end of the trapped section of floor tilts upward 60 degrees. Anyone standing on the trapped floor who fails a Reflex save (DC 19) teeters and falls



into the alcove; one PC (whoever is nearest the alcove) is thrust into the iron maiden, which immediately snaps shut and bares its iron spikes. Other PCs who fail their saves are knocked prone within the alcove but take no damage. The floor lowers back into place immediately and locks for 3 rounds, during which time it cannot be triggered again.

The iron maiden's lid locks automatically when shut. Opening it requires a *knock* spell, a successful Strength check (DC 28), or a successful Open Lock check (DC 25). A PC trapped in the iron maiden is considered pinned. A trapped PC can make a Strength check (DC 28) to break free. Each such attempt causes 3d4 additional points of damage.

The pressure plate trap can be disarmed by lifting away the 5-pound metal mask on the southeast wall. This locks the floor into place and keeps the iron maiden's lid from opening. The iron maiden itself it bolted to the floor of the alcove.

Tilting Floor and Iron Maiden: CR 8; 10-foot-square section of floor; 10d4+10 points of damage (iron spikes); Reflex save (DC 19) negates; Search (DC 25 for floorplate); Disable Device (DC 25 for floorplate, DC 27 for iron maiden lid).

Iron Maiden: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 25).

U27. Four Symbols.

Two flights of stairs descend toward the south, ending at a set of massive iron doors embossed with horribly contorted faces. Four deep alcoves, two on the middle landing and two at the bottom of the stairs, line the hall.

The walls here are adorned with repellent symbols and designs, save for the north wall, which is marked with four large signs painted in blood. The signs depict, from west to east: a twisted flame; a spiked orb infused by lightning; a cracked, screaming face; and a downward-pointing spike. Beneath each sign is an iron lever set into the wall. Someone has etched a rune resembling a cat-o'-nine-tails into each lever's tip, and all levers are currently in the "up" position.

Show the players the illustration of the signs and levers.

These levers control the four traps on the southern set of iron doors (area **U32**). Pulling down a lever deactivates a specific trap; however, no more than three levers can be pulled down, meaning that at least one trap remains active. (If three levers are pulled down, the fourth lever locks in place and cannot be moved until one of the other levers is lifted.) By pulling down specific levers, the PCs choose which trap(s) to disarm and which to leave in place. The traps are as follows:

Lever #1 (twisted flame): Pulling down this lever deactivates a fire *glyph of warding*.

Lever #2 (spiked, lightning orb): Pulling down this lever disarms an electricity *glyph of warding*.

Lever #3 (cracked, screaming face): Pulling down this lever deactivates a sonic *glyph of warding*.

Lever #4 (iron spike): Pulling down this lever locks the concealed, spike-filled pit in front of the double doors.

When the southern set of doors open, all levers rise to their "up" positions; undischarged glyphs and the pit trap reset when the doors close.

U28. Master of Pain.

The walls of this octagonal room are painted with grisly torture scenes. A strange apparatus rises from the middle of the floor. It consists of a wooden, X-shaped cross mounted atop a hideous, iron-wrought stand. The stand is bolted to a large stone turntable on the floor and is covered with wicked barbs and spikes, although handles enable one to turn the apparatus to face different directions.

A half-elf, his face half-ruined by fire, is bound to the cross by a series of iron chains and shackles. Floating nearby is a creature with red skin, sharp teeth, and a dozen spindly claws that hang menacingly from its bulbous form.

The fire-scarred half-elf strapped to the torture device is Bhell, a sadistic and masochistic cleric of Loviatar. The bulbous

creature floating next to him is his ally: a rast. With the rast's help, Bhell is testing his latest handiwork and experiencing new levels of pain. He removes his robe and holy symbol before chaining himself to the cross; they are bundled in a heap next to Bhell's scourge.

Anyone chained to the torture device can get free with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 30).

Creatures (EL 7): The rast rushes to attack intruders. Bhell is currently chained to the torture device and cannot escape. If the rast is defeated, the half-elf claims to be a cleric of Tempus who was captured by brigands on the road. He offers the following information in response to specific questions.

Who are you, and what are you doing here? *"I am Darvain Evenhand. I was captured by brigands, blindfolded, and brought here. An evil cleric intends to sacrifice me to some foul undead creature that lurks in a temple near here."* (False)

What is this place? *"They call it the House of Torment, a shrine dedicated to the pain goddess, Loviatar."* (True)

Who runs the temple? *"The temple's high cleric is a despicable woman named Evelyth who hides her face behind a spiked wooden mask that's been painted black."* (Partially true; Evelyth wears a mask, but she isn't the high cleric.)

Who owns these? (referring to the bundled black robe, holy symbol of Loviatar, and scourge on the floor): *"I don't know his name. When my interrogator heard you approaching, he transformed into black vapor and seeped through a crack in the wall. His possessions fell to the floor the instant he transformed."* (False. If asked which wall, Bhell nods toward either the west or east, hoping the PCs find the secret door there.)

Bhell is a lithe half-elf with dark eyes, angular features, and a small tattoo of a cat-o'-nine-tails on the palm of his left hand. (He keeps his fist clenched to hide the mark from PCs). The left side of his face appears melted; Bhell ruined his otherwise handsome face during a fire ritual—a sacrifice to his beloved goddess. He wears leather pants (hidden in which are two potions and a dagger), and his bare chest is covered with bleeding scars (dealt by the rast).

Bhell, Male Half-Elf Clr5 (Loviatar): CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 5d8+15; hp 42 (currently 31); Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 11); Atk +5 melee (1d8+1, scourge) or +4 melee (1d4+1/crit 19-20, dagger); SA command/rebuke undead 3/day; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +3, Concentration +7, Craft (blacksmithing) +5, Craft (locksmithing) +6, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Disguise +2, Escape Artist +4, Spellcraft +3. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Improved Initiative.

Spells (5/4+1/3+1/2+1, base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* (×5); 1st—*bane*†, *command, cure light wounds, entropic shield, magic weapon;* 2nd—*bull's strength*†, *darkness, death knell, hold person;* 3rd—*bestow curse*†, *meld into stone, protection from elements (fire).*

†Domain spells. *Domains:* Strength (feat of strength 1/day: +5 Strength for 1 round), Suffering (pain touch 1/day; successful melee touch attack bestows -2 enhancement penalty to Strength and Dexterity for 1 minute; does not affect creatures immune to critical hits).

Possessions: Scourge, dagger, *+1 ring of protection, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of endurance,* black robe, holy symbol of Loviatar.

Rast (1): hp 22; *Monster Manual* 154.

Tactics: If freed, Bhell lures the PCs to area **U33**, hoping that the devourer and the undead will destroy them. In the meantime, he allays suspicion by offering to use his "limited curative magic" to heal wounded PCs. He does not like Evelyth (area **U30**) and attacks her, if necessary, to perpetuate his ruse. Bhell is loyal to Andress—for now—and betrays the PCs at the most opportune moment.

Bhell uses his *darkness* spell to aid escapes. If forced to flee, he heads to area **U31** and dons the suit of armor there, then casts his defensive spells. Bhell enjoys casting *death knell* on dying foes and performing coup de grace attacks on *held* opponents.

U29. Death By Firelight.

This 20-foot by 30-foot room is empty save for two iron candlesticks jutting from the floor, a flickering orange flame dancing atop each one.

Creature (EL 7): The devourer in area **U33** used a *lesser planar ally* spell to call forth a hellcat to guard this room. The hellcat is invisible in this lit area. In the dark, it shows up as a faintly glowing outline visible up to 30 feet away.

Hellcat (1): hp 52; *Monster Manual* 48-51 (devil).

Development: The hellcat roars when it attacks, alerting the denizens of areas **U28**, **U30**, and **U33**. After 1 round, Evelyth appears from area **U30** and joins the fray. The devourer in **U33** sends two *desecrated* zombies to assist.

U30. Tormentorium.

The purpose of this chamber is clear at a glance. Along the north wall are six 8-foot-square pits, their yawning maws covered by iron grates with heavy padlocks. An ugly iron chair equipped with manacles stands near the south wall, next to a stone, claw-footed brazier filled with iron pokers and red-hot coals. Hanging from the ceiling are chains ending in wicked iron hooks.

The south wall, unlike the others in this hateful complex, is not covered in horrid symbols or murals. Instead, someone has plastered the wall and embedded the skeletons of several unfortunates in the plaster, trapping them in a dance macabre for all time. Three iron candlesticks rise from the middle of the floor, each one clutching a flickering flame.

This torture chamber hasn't seen much use as yet. Once the temple is fully operational, however, Andress plans to kidnap local villagers and indoctrinate them into the cult of Loviatar by letting them experience pain beyond their wildest dreams.

All of the pits are currently empty, although PCs who are taken captive in the House of Torment might be detained here.

Padlocked Iron Grate: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30 (grate), 15 (padlock); Break (DC 26); Open Lock (DC 25).

Creatures (EL 5): One of Andress's acolytes, Evelyth, has been charged with getting this room in order, but she is not the sole occupant. Eight skeletons embedded in the plaster of the south wall (each marked with an ✕ on the map) are *animated* undead guardians that leap forth when commanded by an evil cleric or when someone other than Evelyth tampers with any of the room's sinister accoutrements.

Evelyth wears black robes and a black, hinged wooden mask adorned with wicked spikes. She appears as a stern, raven-haired woman with a jagged scar on both sides of her mouth that gives the illusion of a cruel grin, but Evelyth never smiles. Thoroughly depraved, she charges fearlessly into battle with her scourge and would sooner kill herself than be taken prisoner.

Evelyth, Female Human Clr2 (Loviatar): hp 19 (currently 15); other statistics identical to Dyrch (area **U5**). Evelyth carries the keys to the padlocks that seal the pits' iron grates.

***Desecrated* Humanoid Skeletons (8):** hp 8 each; *Monster Manual* 165. These skeletons receive a +2 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Charisma checks to turn them suffer a -6 profane penalty.

U31. Bhell's Bedchamber. The door to this chamber is trapped; see **Trap** below for details.

This room is sparsely furnished, containing a bed, a dresser, and a small wooden coffin with a lid sculpted in the shape of a grinning halfling.

The dresser has three drawers. It holds the **Treasure**.

Trap (EL 4): In addition to biting the hand of the person who opens it (see the "Biting Doors" section above), this door injects poison into the wound unless the eyes of the demon face are depressed as the doorknob is turned. Disabling the poison trap can be done only after the biting mechanism is disabled.

Poisonous Biting Door: CR 4; 1 point of damage plus deathblade poison (Injury DC 20; initial damage 1d6 Con, secondary damage 2d6 Con); Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 25 for both the biting mechanism and poison injector).

Treasure: The top drawer of the dresser contains a wooden mask decorated with barbed whips from a cat-o'-nine-tails and a red ceremonial robe with hood. The middle drawer contains common clothes that Bhell wears when moving about the surface. The bottom drawer contains a disguise kit, a healer's kit, and assorted blood-encrusted weapons (four daggers, a sickle, three darts, and a handaxe).

Bhell uses the halfling coffin as a storage chest. It contains a suit of masterwork chainmail and a pair of spiked gauntlets.

U32. Screaming Doors.

These iron double doors feature dozens of embossed human and demonic faces, their eyes and mouths wide with agony, their screams silenced.

These doors are not locked and open into area **U33**. They are rigged with four traps, up to three of which can be deactivated by pulling down the special levers in area **U27**. (These doors were intended as a rite of passage whereby clerics of Loviatar could choose which form of pain they wished to endure before crossing the threshold into the temple.)

These doors can be opened safely from area **U33**. The traps are triggered only by persons coming from the north.

Trap #1 (EL 2): If lever #1 in area **U27** was not pulled down, opening the doors triggers a fire *glyph of warding* that fills the 10-foot by 5-foot area directly north of the double doors.

Fire *Glyph of Warding:* CR 2; 5-foot radius blast, 4d8 points of fire damage; Reflex save (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 19).

Trap #2 (EL 2): If lever #2 in area **U27** was not pulled down, opening the doors triggers an electrical *glyph of warding* that fills the 10-foot by 5-foot area due north of the double doors.

Electrical *Glyph of Warding:* CR 2; 5-foot radius blast, 4d8 points of electrical damage; Reflex save (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 19).

Trap #3 (EL 2): If lever #3 in area **U27** was not pulled down, opening the doors triggers a sonic *glyph of warding* that fills the 20-foot by 10-foot area due north of the double doors.

Sonic *Glyph of Warding:* CR 2; 5-foot radius blast, 4d8 points of sonic damage; Reflex save (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 19).

Trap #4 (EL 4): If lever #4 in area **U27** was not pulled down, the 40-foot by 10-foot section of floor north of the doors opens into a 20-foot-deep, spiked pit the instant they are opened.

Spiked Pit (20 feet deep): CR 4; no attack roll necessary (2d6); +10 melee (1d4 spikes for 1d4+2 points of damage, plus poison, per successful hit); greenblood oil (Injury DC 13; initial damage 1 Con, secondary damage 1d2 Con); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

U33. Temple of Loviatar.

This enormous triangular chamber is illuminated by a sickly red light emanating from the gaping maw of a great stone cauldron. The cauldron sits atop a 10-foot-high granite platform with stairways leading up to it on either side.

The ceiling to the north is 20 feet tall and forms a balcony overlooking the rest of the chamber. This balcony is supported by a pair of obsidian pillars carved to resemble horned demons clutching scourges and great blades. To the south, the ceiling soars to a height of 40 feet.

CAULDRON OF DESECRATION

The *cauldron of desecration* is an unholy relic created long ago. It was lost and recovered many times before ending up in Tempest Tower, stronghold of the clerics of Talos. When Tempest Tower fell, the *cauldron* spilled out into the swamp. Its guardian—a devourer—remained by the *cauldron*'s side for years until Andress happened upon them (see the "Adventure Background" for details).

Any skeleton or corpse of Medium-size or smaller *animated* within the *cauldron* is also permanently *desecrated*. The undead retains its extra hit points and profane bonuses even after leaving the *cauldron* and its vicinity. If the *cauldron*'s power is used by a cleric in a shrine or temple dedicated to the cleric's deity, the desecration effect is enhanced (as described in the spell description on page 192 of the *Player's Handbook*).

So evil is the *cauldron of desecration* that its power extends beyond itself. Undead that are not *animated* within the *cauldron* gain the benefits of a *desecrate* spell so long as they remain within 20 feet of it. (This goes for the devourer as well.) However, they lose their extra hit points and profane bonuses as soon as they travel more than 20 feet from the *cauldron*.

The *cauldron* has SR 25 and is impervious to *dispel magic* and *break enchantment* spells. It is rendered temporarily powerless if brought into a *hallowed* area. A *consecrate* spell cast directly on the *cauldron* must overcome the item's spell resistance to have any effect (even though spell resistance does not normally apply to the *consecrate* spell). If the spell overcomes the *cauldron*'s SR, the *cauldron* cracks and explodes, dealing 5d8 points of unholy damage to all good-aligned creatures within 30 feet and half damage to creatures that are neither good nor evil. The *cauldron* itself is destroyed in the unholy blast.

The devourer was bound to this plane to protect the *cauldron of desecration*. If the *cauldron* is destroyed, the devourer vanishes in a cloud of cloying darkness, taking Shaunnra's captive soul with it.

Caster Level: 18th; *Weight:* 600 lbs.

Assuming the devourer is alerted to the PCs' intrusion, it has taken measures to prepare for their arrival. Read or paraphrase the following:

> Standing in front of the cauldron are several monsters that seem to be in varying states of decay. You see four enormous spiders, some of them with legs and eyes missing; a reddish-yellow creature with a single wavering antenna, a paddle-shaped tail, and chitinous armor plating; and two putrid, ovoid horrors with spine-laced tentacles and great, gaping maws!
>
> However, these horrors pale in comparison to the gaunt, 15-foot-tall creature rising up from behind the cauldron and the shrivelled form of a woman trapped in its hollow ribcage. The creature cracks a wide smile, and the thing in its ribcage begins to shudder and wail.

The walls of this temple are free of the dreadful symbols and murals that pervade the complex. Also, there are no candlesticks lit with *continual flame* spells. The only source of illumination, apart from what the PCs bring with them, is the dread glow of the *cauldron of desecration* perched atop the central platform. The cauldron is described in the above sidebar.

The obsidian pillars that support the northern balcony are exquisitely sculpted but otherwise ordinary.

Creatures (EL 14): This room contains the devourer plus several creatures killed by Harular's Claws and *animated* by Andress: four Medium-size monstrous spiders, a rust monster, and two otyughs. The spiders and rust monster were created with the help of the cauldron and thus have +2 hit points per Hit Die and a +2 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. All Charisma checks made to turn them suffer a -6 profane penalty. The otyughs were too big to fit inside the cauldron, but they gain the benefits of a *desecrate* spell so long as they remain within 20 feet of the relic.

- **Devourer (1):** hp 78; see *Monster Manual* 53-54.
- ***Desecrated* Medium-size Monstrous Spider Zombies (4):** CR 1; Medium-size Undead; HD 2d12+7 (includes Toughness feat and desecration); hp 17 each; Init -1; Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 11 (touch 9, flat-footed 11); Atk +4 melee (1d6 plus poison, bite); SA poison (Injury DC 14; initial and secondary damage 1d4 Str); SQ undead, partial actions only, Charisma checks to turn suffer a -6 profane penalty; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.
- ***Desecrated* Rust Monster Zombie (1):** CR 1; Medium-size Undead; HD 2d12+7 (includes Toughness feat and desecration); hp 19; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 9, flat-footed 14); Atk +4 melee (special, antenna touch) or +4 melee (1d3+2, bite); SA rust; SQ undead, partial actions only, Charisma checks to turn suffer a -6 profane penalty; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.
- **Otyugh Zombies (2):** CR 2; Large Undead; HD 4d12+3 (includes Toughness feat); hp 35 each; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 16 (touch 8, flat-footed 16); Atk +4 melee (1d6+4, tentacle rake) or +4 melee (1d4+4 and disease, bite); Reach 10 ft. (15 ft. with tentacle); SA improved grab, constrict 1d6+4, disease (filth fever; DC 12; incubation period 1d3 days; damage 1d3 temporary Dex and 1d3 temporary Con); Str 17, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Note: So long as the otyugh zombies remain within 20 feet of the *cauldron of desecration,* they get +8 hit points as well as a +1 profane bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws. Turn checks against them suffer a -3 profane penalty.

Tactics: The devourer climbs onto the platform and stands behind the cauldron, which provides one-half cover (one-quarter cover against foes on the balcony or flying opponents). Drawing on Shaunnra's trapped essence, it begins using its various spell-like abilities. The paladin's essence fuels the devourer with enough power to employ ten spell-like abilities, at which point Shaunnra's essence is destroyed and the devourer must attempt to trap someone else. If the aasimar cleric Levetron is with the PCs, the devourer chooses him before all others.

The devourer uses its *control undead* spell-like ability to command the zombies to attack. If it suspects the presence of invisible foes, it uses its *true seeing* ability. Using its *confusion* spell-like ability to neutralize as many PCs as possible (the zombies in the room are not affected by the spell), the devourer begins using its *spectral hand* spell-like ability coupled with its energy drain power. It reserves its *suggestion* and *ray of enfeeblement* spell-like abilities for confrontational warrior-types.

The monstrous spider zombies have the ability to climb vertical surfaces. The rust monster zombie heads straight for the most heavily armored PC. The otyughs stay within 20 feet of the cauldron and use their reach to grab and constrict prey.

The starting locations of the creatures are marked on the tactical map below. If the devourer sent two of its monstrous spider zombies to help the hellcat in area **U29**, there will be two fewer zombies than shown on the tactical map.

Development: The sounds of battle in this room alert the denizens of areas **U28**-**U30** (assuming they are still alive). The hellcat arrives in 1 round, Evelyth arrives in 2 rounds, and Bhell and his rast companion arrive in 3 rounds.

Unless the PCs have access to a *limited wish, miracle,* or *wish* spell handy, the only way they can free Shaunnra is by destroying the devourer. When this happens, read or paraphrase the following:

> The creature falls dead. For a moment, the entire world holds its breath, and then the creature's ribs spread wide. The tortured soul of Shaunnra Stillhand crawls from its prison. It floats free, and an opalescent glow ignites around the spirit. Shaunnra looks at you. Her eyes convey the depth of her gratitude, and then, with a murmur that you feel more than hear, she flies up through the ceiling and vanishes.

Shaunnra's shrivelled spirit soars into the afterlife. If she is *raised*, she must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) for each negative level or lose that level permanently. At the start of this encounter, Shaunnra has accrued six negative levels.

Shaunnra's statistics (given below) assume that she has not lost any levels. Note that a loss of levels could also result in a weakening of her mount, Ruth (see area **T1e** for Ruth's statistics and page 43 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Shaunnra Stillhand, Female Human Pal8 (Ilmater): CR 8; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 8d10+8; hp 63; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (30 ft. base); AC 22 (touch 12, flat-footed 22); Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+4 plus 2d6 holy damage/crit 19-20, *+1 holy longsword* with Weapon Focus feat); SA smite evil (+4 attack bonus, +8 damage bonus), turn undead 7/day; SQ *detect evil,* lay on hands (32 hp), divine health, aura of courage, *remove disease* 2/week, spells; AL LG; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 18.

Skills: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +12, Heal +11, Knowledge (religion) +9, Ride +8. *Feats:* Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (longsword).

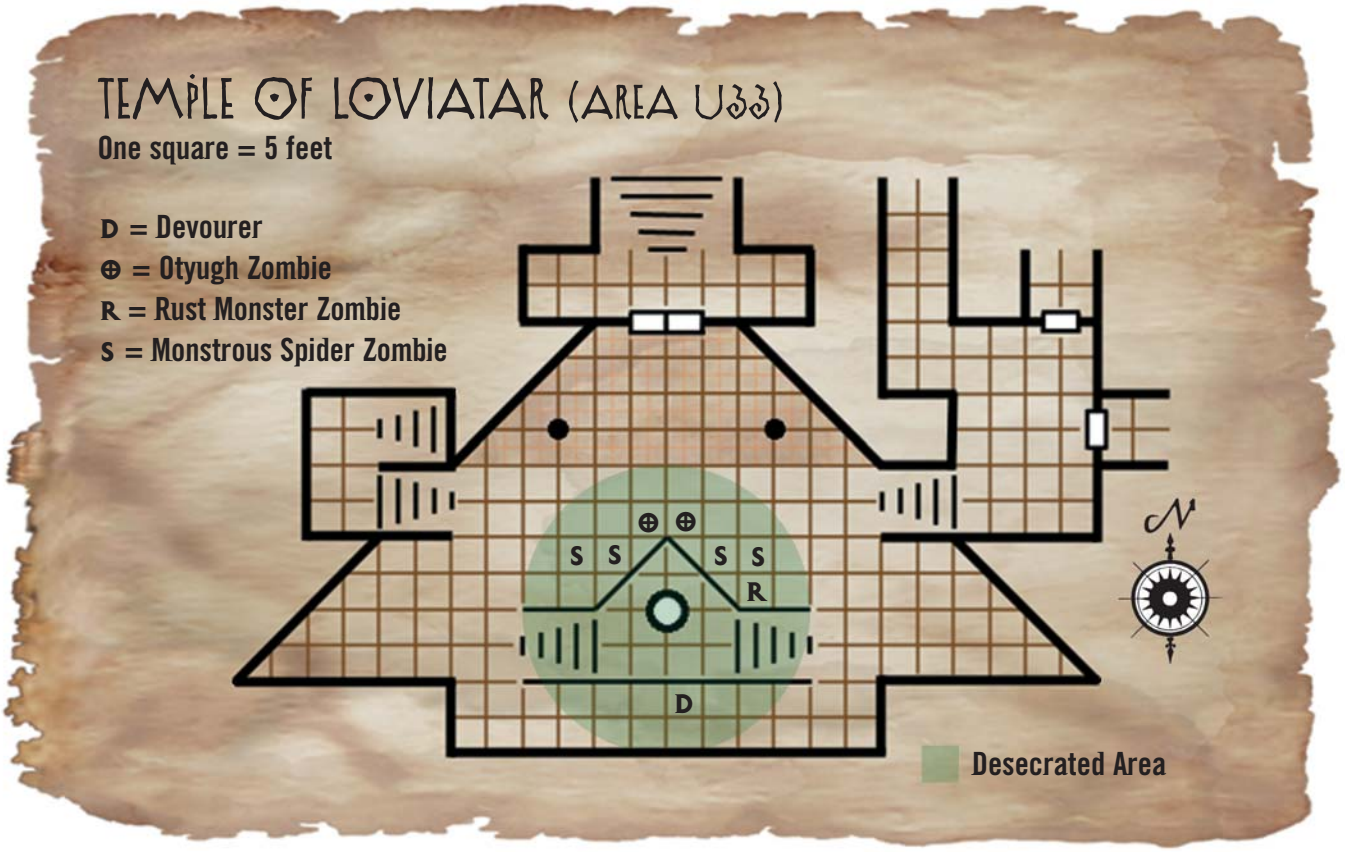
Spells (2/1, base save DC = 13 + spell level): 1st—*cure light wounds, divine favor;* 2nd—*shield other*.

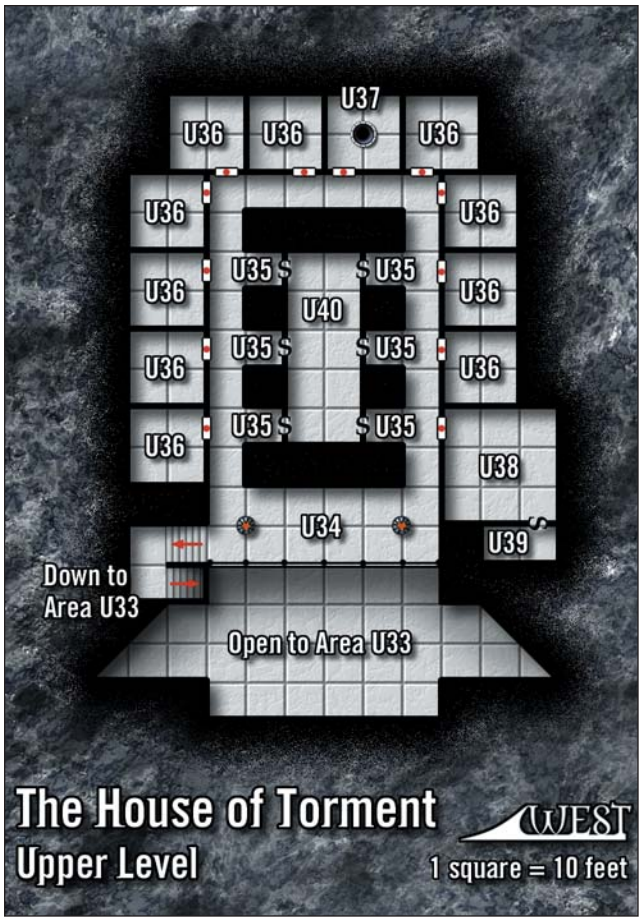
Possessions: +2 half-plate, +1 large steel shield of light fortification, +1 holy longsword.

U34. Balcony.

> This 20-foot-deep balcony looks out over the main temple from a height of 15 feet. It is enclosed by a barbed, wrought-iron railing shaped to resemble entwined whips and scourges. Two stone braziers shaped like monstrous claws erupt from the floor, tendrils of smoke spewing forth from black incense in the palm of each claw.

The braziers were formed with the aid of *stone shape* spells but are otherwise unremarkable. The incense has a spicy aroma.





U35. Alcoves. Each of these alcoves is identical.

Worked into the back wall of this 10-foot-deep alcove is a bas-relief depicting a triangle inscribed with a circle, within which is painted the sneering face of a woman with barbed whips for hair. The wall to the right of the bas-relief bears an inset iron plate with a hand-shaped indentation.

The bas-relief depicts Loviatar, goddess of pain. The back wall of each alcove is also a secret door that pivots on a central vertical axis. All six secret doors are connected mechanically so that if one door opens, the others open as well.

Opening a secret door requires that a Small or Medium-size humanoid creature place its right hand in the hand-shaped plate on the wall. Closer inspection reveals three tiny holes in the indentation. If a PC places his or her open hand in the indentation without simultaneously uttering the word "Loviatar," a **Trap** is triggered. (The word can be spoken as part of a phrase, such as "Praise Loviatar!" or "Loviatar, in your name I am strong.") The secret door opens regardless of whether the trap is sprung. The secret doors remain open for 1 round before closing automatically.

Trap (EL 2): If a PC places his hand in the indentation and fails to speak the proper command word, he triggers a *glyph of warding* that targets him with a *dispel magic*. Once the glyph is triggered, that alcove remains safe until Andress renews the spell. The tiny holes in the hand-shaped iron plate are red herrings intended to make rogues think that they might contain poisoned needles or some other mechanical device.

Dispel Magic Glyph of Warding **(1 per alcove):** CR 2; spell effects cast on the person are *dispelled* (dispel check is 1d20+8 against a DC of 11 + the spell's caster level); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Development: If Andress has withdrawn to area **U40**, she places eighteen *desecrated* skeletons here—three per alcove. These are the same skeletons found in area **U21**; if they have already been destroyed, they are not encountered here. All eighteen skeletons rush forth to attack PCs on first sight. The sounds of battle alert Andress, who begins casting defensive spells (see area **U40** for details).

U36. Acolytes' Quarters. There are ten of these chambers, all furnished identically.

Disturbing murals cover the walls of this 20-foot-square room. Arranged about the walls are six hard wooden cots, and a single, unlit iron candlestick erupts from the floor.

Currently there are far more cots than Andress's followers can fill, but by the grace of Loviatar, she hopes to lure more worshipers to the House of Torment once Twilight Hollow has been enslaved.

Although Evelyth uses these rooms from time to time, she keeps no valuables here.

U37. Demonic Well.

A stone-rimmed well plunges into darkness in the middle of this room. A sculpted demon fixture stands atop the well, clutching an iron winch rigged with a rope and bucket.

The well shaft descends 30 feet to an underground, freshwater stream. The well's demonic fixture looks disturbing, but it is harmless.

U38. Andress's Bedchamber.

Suspended from the ceiling by four iron chains is a large bed that dangles 2 feet off the floor. The bed itself consists of a wooden frame covered with taut leather straps—no mattress, pillows, or other creature comforts.

Rising from the floor to either side of the bed is a barbed, wrought-iron candlestick clutching a feeble orange flame—barely enough light to illuminate the corners of the 30-foot-square room.

A tall, ornately sculpted wardrobe against the north wall has been adorned with human skulls. Nearby stands an wrought-iron oval frame grasping a full-length mirror. Covering the west, north, and east walls are murals depicting bloody massacres. The south wall shows a procession of manacled prisoners being led by red-robed clerics to a black throne, seated in which is a beautiful yet harsh-looking woman in black leather brandishing a blood-red scourge.

The mural of the woman with the scourge is intended to represent Loviatar. The secret door leading to area **U39** is hidden in the pain goddess's black throne.

The wardrobe contains three black robes embroidered with silver thread, each bearing the symbol of a nine-tailed scourge, as well as several tight-fitting, red and black gowns. Hanging

on the back wall of the wardrobe are two sets of masterwork manacles (with keys), a black hood, and a whip. Above this paraphernalia, on a shelf, sits the **Treasure**.

Masterwork Iron Manacles: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 10; Break (DC 28); Escape Artist (DC 35); Open Lock (DC 30).

The mirror is exquisitely crafted, weighs 225 pounds in its iron frame, and is worth 750 gp intact.

Treasure: PCs searching the wardrobe find a small ebony box shaped like a miniature sarcophagus (60 gp). It contains a masterwork dagger specially built with a reservoir designed to hold up to three doses of poison. A small groove running the length of the blade allows the poison to flow to the tip. A small crystal vial shaped like a skull holds a single dose of purple worm poison (see page 80 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

U39. Secret Treasury.

The secret door pivots open to reveal a dark room 10 feet deep and 20 feet wide. Four iron-wrought stands rest against the south wall, and upon each stand sits a wooden chest with iron fittings and hinges. Each chest bears a lock that resembles a gaping skull.

All four chests are locked, and Andress carries the keys.

Iron-reinforced Wooden Chest: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Break (DC 25); Open Lock (DC 30).

Trap (EL 2 per chest): Andress has trapped the chests with *glyphs of warding* that appear as tiny, scourge-like markings in some innocuous place. Each *glyph* triggers when anyone other than Andress opens the chest.

***Glyphs of Warding* (1 per chest):** CR 2; see each chest (below) for specific effects; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28); Dispel (DC 19).

Chest #1: The *glyph of warding* triggers a *spiritual weapon* spell, summoning forth a ghostly scourge that attacks for 8 rounds before disappearing (Atk +6/+1 melee; 1d8/crit ×2). The chest contains the following treasure:

- a carved bone statuette depicting a skeletal knight (30 gp);
- a finely wrought gold bracelet (55 gp);
- an ornate silver ewer (60 gp) wrapped in black cloth;
- a silver pendant set with four red garnets (450 gp);
- a rock crystal flask (100 gp) containing four doses of antitoxin (50 gp per dose).

Chest #2: The *glyph* on this chest triggers an *inflict serious wounds* spell that deals 3d8+8 points of damage. No attack roll is required, but the *glyph* can cause harm only to a creature in direct contact with the chest. This chest contains:

- a black cloth mask sewn with four moonstones and dozens of tiny, silver hooks (260 gp);
- a jade comb shaped like a green dragon (180 gp);
- three glass flasks of alchemist's fire (20 gp each);
- a bundle of 12 smokesticks (20 gp each);
- three thunderstones (30 gp each) in a rhodochrosite bowl set with citrines (450 gp).

Chest #3: The *glyph* on this chest triggers a *summon monster III* spell that brings forth a dretch (see page 41 of the *Monster Manual* for statistics). After 8 rounds or when slain, it vanishes in an inky black cloud. The chest contains:

- a leather glove with steel claws protruding from the fingertips; used as a weapon, it rakes for 1d3 points of damage.
- a gold circlet set with a fiery yellow corundum (1,500 gp);
- a gold censer with red spinel inlays (900 gp);
- four flasks of warm, bubbling acid (10 gp each);
- a bundle of 25 *+1 flaming arrows*.

Chest #4: The *glyph* triggers a *contagion* spell, which manifests as a dusty cloud that catches everyone within 5 feet of the chest. The cloud afflicts anyone in the area with cackle fever (incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 Wisdom) unless a Fortitude save (DC 16) succeeds). Consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 75, for a description of this disease. The chest contains:

- a wooden headdress adorned with howler spines (80 gp);
- five black, bony spikes from a manticore;
- a hollowed-out minotaur's horn set with bloodstones (300 gp), tucked inside which is a tiny azurite tube (25 gp) containing three ounces of *stone salve;*
- a three-chambered glass flask containing three potions: *hiding, sneaking,* and *Wisdom*.
- a scroll tube made from a unicorn's horn (250 gp) holding a scroll of *lightning bolt* (maximized, cast at 12th level).

U40. The Altar of Agony. If she has retreated to this chamber, Andress dons her ceremonial red robe and mask (see **Treasure**) and orders the shrine's guardian (see **Creatures**) to remain vigilant while she prays to Loviatar for strength and casts defensive spells (see **Tactics**). If Harular accompanied Andress to the temple, the half-dragon halfling is by her side.

All of the secret doors leading to this room are connected mechanically so that they all open and close together; they are also trapped (see area **U35** for details). On the floor by each secret door is an iron pedal that, when depressed, allows the doors to be opened easily from inside the room.

Hidden behind the secret door is a 10-foot-high rectangular room lit by flickering orange flames atop iron-wrought poles. Dominating the middle of the chamber is an iron altar covered with spikes, impaled on which are a dozen or more humanoid skulls. Near the altar stands a T-shaped iron rack with hooks for hanging clothes. An ugly iron censer is suspended above the altar by three chains affixed to the ceiling. Tendrils of foul-smelling purple smoke issue from the dagger-shaped holes in the censer. The walls near the floor and ceiling are painted with bright orange flames and adorned with dangling sets of iron manacles.

If Andress is not present, her ceremonial robe and mask hang on the T-shaped rack by the altar; otherwise, the rack is bare. Manacles hang from every wall that is not marked by a secret door.

PCs who inspect the altar closely and succeed at a Search or Spot check (DC 16) can see that it has several hinges and gears built into it.

Creatures (EL 9+): An ethereal xill cleric of Loviatar guards this room. The creature wears a suit of black studded leather armor tightened with straps and buckles and a magic cloak made from darkmantle hide (see **Treasure** below).

The iron altar is an animated object constructed by Bhell and brought to life by Loviatar. When commanded to attack by a cleric of the pain goddess, the vaguely rectangular altar unfolds a pair of arms and legs, transforming into an 8-foot-tall headless, spike-covered humanoid. The transformation takes 1 round. The animated altar doggedly pursues foes but cannot pass through a closed "biting door."

Quel, Xill Clr2 (Loviatar): CR 8; Medium-size Outsider (lawful, evil); HD 5d8+10 (xill) plus 2d8+4 (Clr); hp 50; Init +7; Spd 40 ft.; AC 24 (touch 13, flat-footed 21); Atk +9 melee (1d6+3 plus 2d6 points of lawful damage/crit 19-20, *+1 lawful short sword)*, +9 melee (1d6+2/crit 19-20, short sword with *magic weapon* spell), +3 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws); SA improved grab, paralysis, implant, rebuke undead 3/day; SQ planewalk, SR 21; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +4, Escape Artist +11, Heal +3, Intuit Direction +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +11, Spellcraft +3, Spot +9, Tumble +11. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Multidexterity, Multiweapon Fighting.

Cleric Spells (4/3+1, base save DC = 11 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, guidance, light, mending;* 1st—*cause fear, endure elements* (fire)†, *magic weapon, shield of faith.*

†Domain spell. *Domains:* Evil (casts evil spells at +1 caster level), Strength (feat of strength 1/day: +2 Strength for 1 round).

Possessions: +1 studded leather armor, +1 lawful short sword, darkmantle cloak (see **Treasure** below for complete statistics), short sword.

Animated Iron Altar (1): CR 3; Large Construct; HD 4d10; hp 33; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 9, flat-footed 14); Atk +5 melee (1d8+4 plus spikes, slam); Reach 10 ft.; SA spikes (see below); SQ construct, hardness 10; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

SA—Spikes (Ex): Each time the animated altar hits, it impales the target on 1d4 iron spikes for 1d4 points of damage per spike.

Tactics: Andress dons her *mask of silent casting* and *robe of minor fire resistance* and casts the following spells on herself: *mage armor, freedom of movement, spell immunity (magic missile), bull's strength, expeditious retreat, endure elements* (lightning), and *invisibility purge*. She then drinks her *potion of cat's grace*. In combat, she casts *spiritual weapon, bane, poison,* and *inflict wounds* spells. She casts *death knell* on any foe who falls in battle.

Harular drinks his *potion of resist elements* (fire).

While ethereal, Quel casts *endure elements* (fire) and *shield of faith* at the first sign of trouble. As the PCs enter the room, the xill casts *magic weapon* on its short sword, then uses its move action to materialize next to a PC. It calls upon its feat of strength domain ability the following round as it makes two sword attacks and two claw attacks. It relies on its spell resistance to neutralize enemy spellcasters.

Treasure: Three new magic items can be found in this area: Andress's *mask of silent casting* and *robe of minor fire resistance*, and Quel's *darkmantle cloak*.

¦ ***Mask of Silent Casting:*** This simple wooden mask allows its wearer to omit verbal components when casting spells; spells cast by the wearer are effectively silenced (as though cast with the Silent Spell feat). Note that the mask does nothing to silence the wearer's normal voice and does not allow silent use of magic items requiring command words.

Caster Level: 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, Silent Spell feat, *spell immunity (silence); Market Price:* 56,000 gp.

¦ ***Robe of Minor Fire Resistance:*** This heavy red robe protects the wearer from fire, absorbing the first 15 points of damage from any fire attack. (This is a variation of the *ring of elemental resistance;* see *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 193.)

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *protection from elements; Market Price:* 16,000 gp.

¦ ***Darkmantle Cloak:*** This black cloak is fashioned from the hide of a darkmantle and allows the wearer to cast *darkness* (as a 5th-level sorcerer) once per day on command. The cloak is the origin of the effect unless the wearer designates (and touches) a different object.

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *darkness; Market Price:* 4,000 gp.

Development: Andress is unrecognizable behind her *mask of silent casting*. If the PCs have not yet exposed her treachery and the battle turns against her, Andress flees the House of Torment (with the aid of her *expeditious retreat* spell) and returns to the Temple of Ilmater, determined to find sanctuary within its walls and turn all of Twilight Hollow against the PCs. See Part IV below for details.

PART IV: SORROW'S DEMISE

Andress is quite intelligent, and her *ring of mind shielding* goes a long way toward hiding her evil machinations. It is possible that the PCs might never suspect her hand in Shaunnra's death. It is more likely, however, that the PCs learn the truth and confront her directly—either in the Temple of Ilmater or the House of Torment. If Andress escapes the PCs' wrath, you can bring her back later as a recurring NPC villain.

This part of the adventure occurs after the PCs have explored most or all of the catacombs under Twilight Hollow, as Andress makes a last-ditch effort to save herself.

If Andress's allies and minions seem unable to destroy the PCs, she tries to turn the village against the PCs (see Event 11). If the PCs persuade the villagers of Andress's guilt and bring her to justice, they are rewarded (see Event 12).

Event II. The Truth

When the PCs are close to uncovering the truth, Andress begins to spread rumors that the heroes have less than good motives for offering their aid to the village. She lies. She paints the PCs as opportunists taking advantage of a village's mourning. She describes the catacombs as a sacred resting place for the clerics of Ilmater and the ancestors of Twilight Hollow. She accuses the PCs of desecrating a holy site. She concocts stories to make the PCs' actions seem evil and malicious in nature.

If the PCs kill Andress without presenting compelling evidence of her guilt, they must explain their actions to the villagers. If the PCs catch Andress in the Temple of Ilmater and attack her, she makes every attempt to flee to a public space where she can use the PCs' violence as proof of their evil hearts. Even if they kill Andress before she can reach the villagers, they must explain themselves. The five acolytes of Ilmater and ten temple guards not only try to protect Andress but also secure help from the villagers.

If Andress succeeds in rousing the villagers, read or paraphrase the following when the PCs return to the village and are within sight of the statue of Ilmater (area **T3**):

> Dozens of villagers gather near the statue of Ilmater in front of the church. Andress stands among them, pointing toward you and your companions. She shouts, "They would come to our village and take advantage of our tragedies to steal from us! These evil monsters have walked among our dead, pilfering from their pockets and disturbing their rest. How can they do this? We welcomed them into our village and helped them in every way possible, and this is the thanks they give us. Desecrating our most holy site! For all we know, they could be the same brigands who murdered fair Shaunnra!" A rumble of anger and agreement moves through the crowd.

Andress believes that the PCs won't risk harming any of the villagers, as an unprovoked attack made against her will only rally the community to her side. If the PCs try to contest the accusations against them, a handful of villagers chide them and demand that they leave Twilight Hollow at once. If they assume a more threatening posture, an outspoken guard or villager charges the PCs with a sickle or spear and shouts, "Demons! We will no longer live in fear!" A full-blown battle ensues.

Convincing the villagers that Andress has done unspeakable things requires a successful Diplomacy check (DC 40), modified according tho the following chart. Feel free to have players roleplay the debates with the villagers rather than roll dice.

Circumstances	DC Modifier
The PCs have only empty accusations.	+0
The PCs have Renadra Wrenbow and other children speak of Andress's cruelty.	-5
The PCs have physical evidence, but not concrete proof.	-5
The PCs catch Andress in a lie and point it out to the villagers.	-10
The PCs persuade a member of Harular's Claws to speak out against Andress.	-10
The PCs persuade a captured cleric of Loviatar to speak against Andress.	-15
The PCs have Levetron (see area **U15**) describe his torture by Andress's hand.	-25

If the PCs succeed in turning the villagers against Andress, read or paraphrase the following:

> A dreadful sneer crosses the cleric's face, and her condescending glare alone seems to push back the villagers around her. "Despair, you blind and suffering fools! Your pain and sorrow is but wine in my chalice. You sought refuge in the hands of a weak god, but it is Loviatar who now holds your fate. You have a choice: Embrace the hardship and misery of life, or suffer a painful death!"

The villagers are terrified and aghast, unable to oppose the will of the woman who has misled them. A stern condemnation of Andress's treachery coupled with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 20) enables the PCs to turn the fearful villagers against the cleric. Surrounded on all sides and unable to flee, Andress chooses to embrace the pain, laughing out loud as the villagers' rusty weapons carve into her soft flesh.

If the PCs fail in their attempt to turn the villagers against her, Andress casts *summon monster IV* and conjures forth a fiendish dire ape. The creature's sudden appearance in a cloud of sulfurous smoke causes the villagers and guards to scatter. She then turns her attention toward the PCs.

Creatures (EL 9): The 36 villagers [Com1; hp 3 each; AC 10; Atk +0 melee (1d6, halfspear or sickle)] are frightened and confused. No experience points should be awarded for killing them, although the PCs should receive full XPs for Andress if they successfully turn the villagers against her.

The fiendish dire ape remains for 9 rounds (the duration of Andress's *summon monster IV* spell) or until slain.

Fiendish Dire Ape (1): CR 4; hp 39; SA *smite good* (1/day; +5 points of damage); SQ cold and fire resistance 10, damage reduction 5/+1, SR 10, darkvision 60 ft.; *Monster Manual* 57.

Development: If he is with the PCs and his wounds were healed, Levetron helps the party any way he can. For instance, he can make a Diplomacy check (DC 10) to add +2 to another character's Diplomacy check. If he has had time to prepare spells, he could offer healing or attempt to *dispel* the fiendish dire ape. Once Andress has been dealt with, he steps forward and allays the villagers' fears with a rousing speech:

> "The evil that threatened to consume this village has been defeated. Through tears and suffering, we have triumphed. Our faith in Ilmater has made us stronger, and the next time evil shows its face, we will have the strength to vanquish it. We must remember the sacrifices of those who died to save this village, and the heroes who helped us through the darkness. They will forever be in our prayers."

Unless the PCs object, Levetron remains in Twilight Hollow to look after Shaunnra's body, conduct religious services, and provide stability. If evil still lurks in the catacombs, the aasimar cleric asks the PCs to help "clean up the mess" but doesn't press them into service.

Andress's familiar, Sphinx, reverts to a normal cat when its mistress is slain. Rather than loiter around Twilight Hollow, it attaches itself to the heroes, following them everywhere. A PC might adopt the feline or, in the case of a sorcerer or wizard, turn it into his or her familiar. Either way, Sphinx bears the heroes no ill will.

Event 12. The Thanks

Once the dust has settled and the PCs are either recovering from their injuries or preparing to leave Twilight Hollow, at some convenient moment they receive a visitor in the night. Renadra Wrenbow (or another child) bravely makes the trek to the heroes' domicile. She brings two things with her: a little posy of violets and a note on a tiny scroll, addressed with neat handwriting to the heroes. Use the note as is, if appropriate, or change the wording to fit what happened in your campaign:

Dear Heroes,

Thank you for your bravery. You're the greatest heroes that ever were. We'll think of you every day and remember you in our prayers.

With love and admiration,

Renadra	*Millicie*	*Joshane*
Mercia	*Attin*	*Sabi*
Daran	*Yoli*	*and Minnow the cat*

Under certain circumstances, the PCs might have had to leave their treasure behind. If this was the case, they find all the treasure they gathered in the catacombs lying in a bundle along with the posy and note from Renadra. What the PCs do with the bundle is up to them.

Concluding the Adventure

Much of what transpires next hinges on whether the PCs leave Twilight Hollow as beloved heroes or hated criminals.

If chased out of town, the heroes might want to return at some point to clear their names and retrieve their belongings. They might harbor vengeful thoughts toward Andress, especially if they know what she did.

On the subject of revenge, Harular and any of his followers who narrowly escaped the PCs might round up new allies and attack Twilight Hollow or lure the PCs into an ambush or trap. Likewise, if Andress is slain but the House of Torment remains intact, surviving clerics of Loviatar might continue Andress's work beneath the village. If the PCs do not deal with the threat immediately, Twilight Hollow might be forced to contend with a fully-staffed temple of Loviatar, with Bhell or some other sadistic cleric leading the congregation.

Feel free to include additional complications in the catacombs under Twilight Hollow. What if Andress rigged them to flood in the event of her demise and the foundations of the village began to come apart? What can the PCs do to uncork the dam Andress built in the catacombs? Can they save Twilight Hollow from eroding too quickly from the inside out?

If they won the hearts of the citizens of Twilight Hollow, the PCs might wish to hang around and delve more deeply into the mystery of the clerics of Talos who once inhabited the western valley. They might also wish to investigate the Tempest Tower ruins more closely. If they do this, you could expand on the maps of that area and create encounters for them within the marshes or below the ruins. Ω

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Encounter Level Chart

Area	Encounter Description	EL
Event 4	Andress Nagheson, Female Human Sor1/Clr8	9
	Sphinx, Cat Familiar	
T1m	Sestra, Female Human Ftr2/Rog2	4
	Lyrr, Male Human Brd4	4
	Weakened Ladder	1
T2a	Hlann, Male Human Clr1	2
	Lornyk, Female Human Clr1	
T2c	Vochnar, Male Half-Orc Ftr4	6
	Orcs (6)	
T4	Sonic *Glyph of Warding*	2
T5k	Electrical *Glyph of Warding*	2
Event 6	Shambling Mound (1)	6
	Skriku, Green Hag Drd2	8
	Stirges (2)	
Event 7	Marthos, Human Ghost Ftr3	7
	Wildfire, Light War Horse Ghost	
V5	Will-o'-wisps (2)	8
V5b	Carrion Crawlers (3)	7
V5d	Electrical *Greater Glyph of Warding*	6
V5e	Ungol Dust Trap	4
V5f	Ochre Jelly (1)	5
V5g	Human Skeletons (9)	7
	Sonic *Glyphs of Warding* (9)	
V6b	Gargantuan Monstrous Centipede (1)	6
V6c	Skriku, Green Hag Drd2	7
U3	Ghosgor, Male Human Ari2/Ftr5	7
	Brigands, Male Human War1 (6)	
U4	Glaster, Male Human Sor5	5
U5	Dyrch, Male Human Clr2	2
U7	Harular, Male Half-dragon Halfling Rgr6	11
	Olipur Shatterstar, Male Gnome Rog4	
	Giant Lizards (2)	
U8	Sliding Blocks	5
U9	Weakened Bridge	1
U10	Embrul and Thulk, Male Human War3	4
U11	Orcs (8)	7
U13	Sharloc, Male Human Clr2	7
	Animated Copper Urn (1)	
	Desecrated Orc Skeletons (10)	
U14	Watery Pit with Brown Mold	3
U15	Fire *Glyph of Warding*	2
U16	Gelatinous Cubes (3)	6
U18	Poisoned Shortspear Trap	5
U20	Advanced Choker (1)	4
U21	Desecrated Human Skeletons (18)	8
U23	Ekariol, Myrcolar and Norvan, Male Human War3 (3)	7
	Dire Wolverine (1)	
U25	Large Fire Elemental (1)	5
U26	Wraith (1)	5
	Tilting Floor and Iron Maiden	7
U28	Bhell, Male Half-elf Clr5	7
	Rast (1)	
U29	Hellcat (1)	7
U30	Evelyth, Female Human Clr2	5
	Desecrated Humanoid Skeletons (8)	
U31	Poisonous Biting Door	4
U32	Fire *Glyph of Warding*	2
	Electrical *Glyph of Warding*	2
	Sonic *Glyph of Warding*	2
	20-foot-deep Spiked Pit	4
U33	Devourer (1)	14
	Desecrated Monstrous Spider Zombies (4)	
	Desecrated Rust Monster Zombie (1)	
	Otyugh Zombies (2)	
U35	*Dispel Magic Glyph of Warding*	2
U39	*Spiritual Weapon Glyph of Warding*	2
	Inflict Serious Wounds Glyph of Warding	2
	Summon Monster III Glyph of Warding	2
	Contagion Glyph of Warding	2
U40	Quel, Xill Clr2	9
	Animated Iron Altar (1)	
Event 11	Villagers, Male and Female Human Com1 (36)	9
	Andress Nagheson, Female Human Sor1/Clr8	9
	Fiendish Dire Ape (1)	

CAN YOU HELP STOCK THE DUNGEON?

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GOTH GONE WRONG?

Why, in the freezing rain of Utter Mongolia—no, check that. Why, in the mind bending whirls of corrupted aether that adorn the wallpaper of Tharizdun's study in the Far Realms (where the Elder Elemental Evil spends his afternoons quietly sipping peppermint tea and contemplating the racing forms) why, why, *why* did you print (ahem) Mistress Luxora's letter? It was as if you had taken all the caffeinated, opinionated, obsessively petulant moments from the time I refer to as my "Goth Period," concentrated them, and injected them via a hypodermic needle into my eyes.

But you are quite correct in your response to said missive. Erotica is just so much wasted text where *Dungeon Magazine* is concerned. Any halfway competent DM can add sexual spice to an adventure without needing outside assistance—especially from a magazine wishing to stay outside a brown wrapper. Frankly, a DM who can't do that for him or herself really has no business reading naughty magazines anyway.

So, bravo. Still, the next time you encounter someone who uses the honorific "Mistress" before her or (Gruumsh preserve you) his name, my advice is to stake her with her own stiletto pumps.

Montejon
Via Email

We'll leave staking to the LARPers. Seriously, we'll print any reasonable letter that offers a novel criticism or poses an interesting question—anything to get you to think. And it looks like Mistress Luzora has accomplished our goal. . . .

DEADGATE ROCKS!

I absolutely love the new minor artifact known as the *Deadgate!* I'm currently running my players through "The Door From Everywhere" (from Issue #88). It fit *perfectly* into my campaign world with just a few modifications! As soon as they're done with this, they'll find their destinies entwined with the nation of Sterich (this name will also change for my campaign, but you get the idea). "Headless" (from Issue #89) is yet another great adventure that I can't wait to run. I also plan on having one of the party's recurring adversaries, Methos, a 6th-level necromancer)/4th-level crypt lord (from *Relics and Rituals* from Sword and Sorcery publishing) pop in and admire the work so (so the PCs might run into a *Deadgate* again). Please, keep putting out such great adventures that fit into any campaign, especially for mid- to high-level groups!

Dennis Schroader
Via Email

Illustration by Kyle Anderson

ISSUE #91 PREVIEW

KAMBRANEX'S MACHINATIONS

By Robert Lee

A wizard can be dangerous, even after he's supposed to be dead . . . especially when his shield guardian turns rogue!

CHALLENGE OF CHAMPIONS IV

By Johnathan M. Richards

The Adventurers Guild is holding their competition to determine the best of the best. Is your group up to the task?

SLOTH

By J. Bradley Schell

Mom always told you to clean your room. It never seems important, though, until those conjurations go wrong.

BONUS!

This issue also includes a complete issue of *Polyhedron Magazine*. Just flip *Dungeon* over for the best in d20 and RPGA coverage. That's two magazines for the same cover price: 176 pages of D&D and d20 gaming material. It's the best value in gaming!

AND MORE!